2007

Organizations; United Methodist Women; 2007

North Ridge United Methodist Church

Summary of MW 2007

January - Nancy Jacobs & Karen Randall
Margy service project
Prayer & Sly - ~~Dem~~ Dental program - Anabella
Hostess Reda Israel & Ruth Weaver Melzger

February - hostess Karen Randall, Nancy Jacobs

March - hostess Diane Peck, Carol Dudley
Made blankets for Crisis Pregnancy Center
Served 29 and holding dinner.

April - hostesses Audrey Peck & Kelli Peck
Gave gift of Mourning in memory of
Sue Seater, Gertrude Tapp and Ira Lachapelle
West & Pendleton Centerchurch for Lafayette walk.

May - hostesses Norma Clark, Gloria Snyder, Lois Ward
Guest Night
Speaker Don Schultz Fellowship Hour Inc.
donation given 75.00

June - Dinner out.

September - Marlene Hence, Jean Darrell hostess
Basket Fair - Nancy Jacobs chair.

~~October~~
October - Sue Rademacher, Sandy Jordy, Sue Schuman
hostess

November - Jerne Schuman, Cindy Freatman hostesses

Dec - Shoe Racks - dinner, Secret Pal, White Gift
to Galway Angel Project.

DIVERSITY

By Dawn Hicks-Roy

When you look at me, what do you see
Do you see me objectively
Or do you see me through eyes of
Prejudice and Discrimination

Will you allow yourself to see
My intellect and wisdom
Integrity and determination
Will you look at me as an asset
Instead of a liability

I do not want you to prohibit me
From achieving excellence
I want you to not only judge me
On my merit, but according to my
Knowledge, skills, and abilities
Instead of the color of my skin or gender

I want you to understand me because by
Doing so you may come to admire my differences
I demand your respect, but this will only come when
You stop trying to change me into a copy of you

When you look at me, what do you see
I hope you see an abundance of
Never ending possibilities
I hope you see the world collectively
Because diversity is not just you and me alone
Diversity is Humanity.

ORDER OF WORSHIP – APRIL 29, 2007
UMW SUNDAY

THE GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

GREETERS: Agnes Drewes & Anabell Freatman
USHERS: Norma Clark June Schuman
Sue Schuman Carole Doebler
ACOLYTES: Sue Rademacher & Audrey Peck

✞ Those who are able please stand
Thought for the day: *May the Lord inspire you to make a conscious difference in the lives of those around you- All Ages, All Races, All Faces and All Places!*

-Blessing to each of you from your United Methodist Women!!

PRELUDE Don Schultz
BRINGING IN GOD'S LIGHT
ANNOUNCEMENTS

✞OPENING HYMN: "Open My Eyes that I May See" Hymnal #454

✞CALL TO WORSHIP:
L: O God, open us to the wonderful winds of your Spirit.
P: Open our eyes to the wonders of your creation.
L: Open our nostrils to the smells of life
P: Open our ears to the words of justice and truth
L: Open our mouths to the taste of freedom and love
P: Open our arms to the touch of our sisters and brothers.
L: Let us turn to God, hating what is evil and loving what is just.
P: So justice can roll down like the waters of the great falls and righteousness like the ever flowing streams.

CALL TO PRAYER (**L**: Left Side, **R**: Right Side)
L: Christ be with me
R: Christ be within me!
L: Christ behind me
R: Christ before me.
L: Christ beside me
R: Christ to win me.
L: Christ to comfort me
R: Christ to restore me!
L: Christ beneath me
R: Christ above me.
L: Christ in my quiet thoughts and places
R: Christ in my chaos and play.
ALL: Christ with me always!!

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: Nicene Creed Hymnal #800
Rena Israel

✞ PASSING THE PEACE

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE "What makes me different from you?"
Kate Peck

HONOREES OF THE UMW *Anabell Freatman & Rena Israel*

JOYS AND CONCERNS OF OUR CHURCH FAMILY *Rena Israel*
THE LORD'S PRAYER
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

✞ WORSHIP HYMN "Blest Be The Tie that Binds" Hymnal #557

ANTHEM

SCRIPTURE LESSON Romans 12: 9-18 *Sue Rademacher*
1 John 3:16-24

MESSAGE "Racial Justice and Diversity" Pastor Kim

OUR RESPONSE TO THE WORD

PRAYER: Rena Israel

Dear God and Father of All people, we confess that we have created divisions and disharmony; in subtle ways and in flagrant ways. We have dismissed the gifts and possible leadership of different human beings due to our own prejudice and ignorance. By our words

and our actions we have stifled possibilities for growth and deeper understanding. Forgive us when we construct roadblocks of hate and fear. Give us eyes to see our sisters and brothers as our siblings and not as our enemies; just because they look or speak or have different traditions than we do. Open our minds to the knowledge of others and our hearts to Love All People in the name of your Son, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

THE OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES

✞ DOXOLOGY Hymnal # 95

✞ PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Dear Heavenly Father: Please accept and bless this offering and the tithe we have willingly given you this morning. May these gifts be used to glorify you and to do your work in the community and world around us. Use it and us Lord, as you see fit, to bring hope, light and Love to the world, through your Son Jesus, as faithful disciples of your word. Amen

GOD'S PEOPLE SCATTER INTO THE WORLD

✞ CLOSING HYMN "Sent forth by God's Blessing" Hymnal # 664

✞ CARRYING GOD'S LIGHT INTO THE WORLD

✞ BENEDICTION Rena Israel

Go into the world and seek to do justice. There you will find your Lord and Savior at work already. Join Him! And receive His blessing, as you become a blessing to others!

✞ GO MAKE OF ALL DISCIPLES

We would like to invite you all downstairs following the service of worship this morning to celebrate with our Honorees a time of fellowship, cake and coffee! See you there!

She has taught the Senior High S/S class along with Walter for the past 11 years.

She has held an office in the Community Club & has been a helper at the Monday A.M. breakfast club. She has also been "at the helm" of Mission Co-ordinator for the Church.

She & her husband Walter are the parents of 2 Children: Kurt who is the Dean of Students at Wooster College and Kelle who is very musical & has directed the Christian Concert both at N.R & Pendleton.

Walt & Sue have 4 grandchildren

We are happy to honor Sue today with a $35.00 gift to District Missions

On September 15th, 1983 our U.M.W honoree & her husband joined N.R. Church.

Since that time they have been a great asset to N.R.

I'd like to call our honoree forward Sue Haener

Sue came to us with great credentials: a Bachelors Degree in Education & as director of the Ransomville Library. (now retired from that position).

She ~~has been an UMW member for~~ from 1998 to 2004 ~~years~~ She ~~has~~ held the position of Mission Co-ordinator of Education & Interpretation, presenting programs sometimes twice a year.

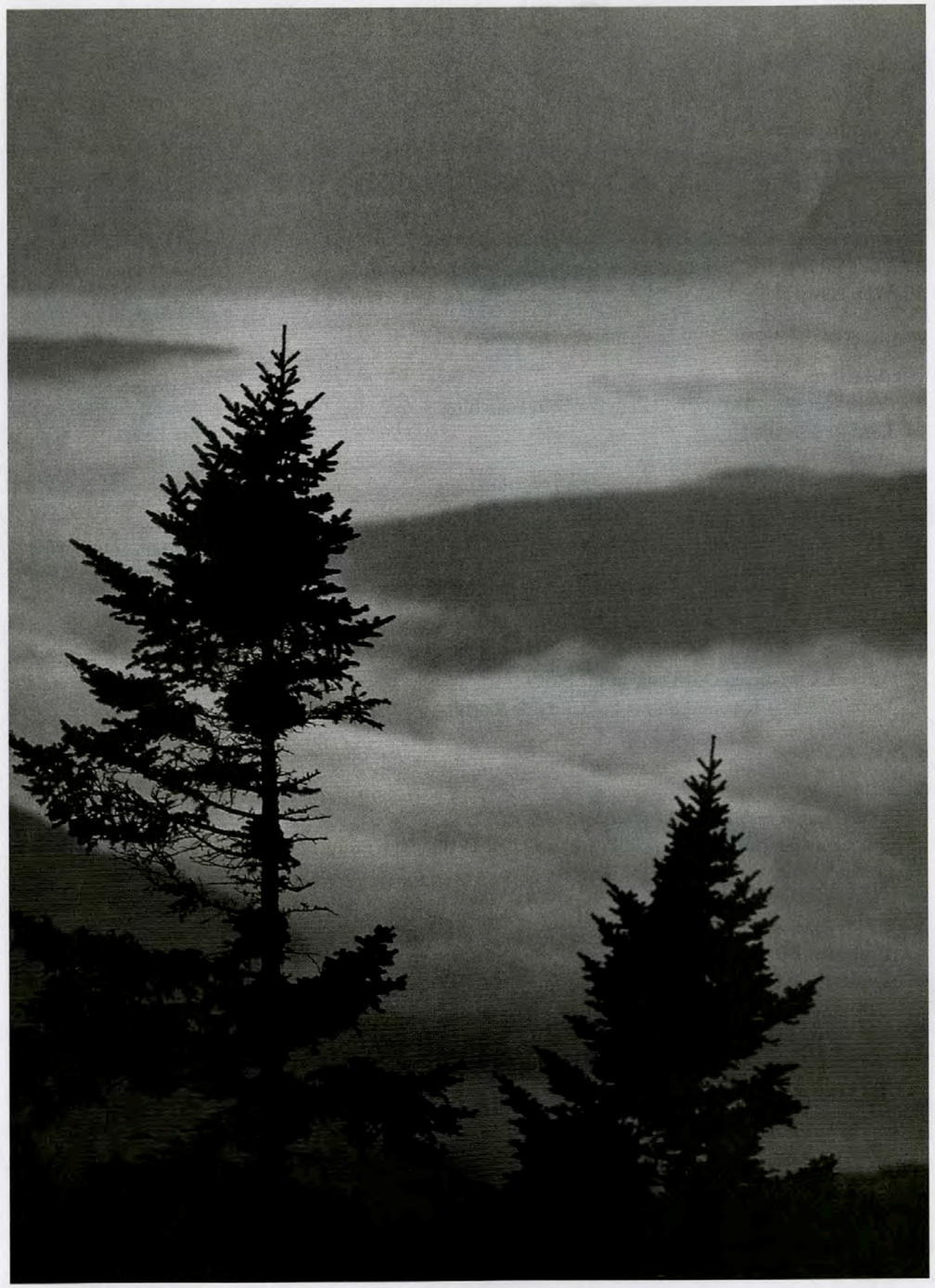
~~Congratulations~~ 1998

Rise! Shine! Glorify God!

2007 United Methodist Women Program Book

Rise! Shine! Glorify God!

Contents



Introduction

"Rise! Shine! Glorify God!" These are words many of us remember from childhood—perhaps we learned a song in Sunday school or vacation Bible school about rising, shining, and giving God the glory, glory—and when we first hear this theme, those words come back to us. But, as those of you who were able to attend Assembly 2006 know, there is so much more to rising, shining, and glorifying God. "Rise! Shine! Glorify God!" was the Assembly theme, and everywhere participants turned, every hymn they sang, every spirit-filled moment was devoted to rising, shining, and glorifying God.

Now it is your turn. Whether you were able to be in Anaheim, California, May 4-7, 2006, with thousands of other women, or whether this is your first encounter with this theme, you're going to have new and exciting experiences through prayer and song, through meditation and action.

There are many ways of interpreting those three simple words. The 2006 Program Book, *Rise, Shine! Glorify God!*, is a collection of 11 programs, each touching in some way on at least one of those actions of adulation. The programs may be used on a monthly basis or selected for special times. In addition, users are encouraged to adapt a program to fit the size of their groups. Please don't disregard a wonderful program because it isn't exactly the format you prefer. United Methodist Women are some of God's most creative beings—bring your creativity to these programs and use them for worship in new and wonderful ways that the author may never have envisioned.

This year's writers are special in the context of the message of the Assembly. Most are either officers of the Women's Division Board or the Cabinet of the Women's Division. Several others were selected for their knowledge of their subject. Writers from the Women's Division Staff are: **Jan Love**, Deputy General Secretary of the Women's Division and member of the Cabinet of the General Board of Global Ministries (Meditation); **Lois Dauway**, Assistant General Secretary for the Section on Christian Social Responsibilities (Bible Study); **Andris Salter**, Assistant General Secretary for the Section on General Administration (Mission Study); and **Cheryl Trent**, Assistant General Secretary for the Section on Membership and Organizational Development (Advent/Christmas). Women's Division Officers and members of the General Board of Global Ministries are: **Kyung Za Yim**, President, Women's Division, and Vice President of GBGM (Meditation); **Josephine Deere**, Recording Secretary (World Thank Offering); **Alice Belton**, Chair of the Section on Finance (Lent/Easter); and **Darlene Dawes**, Chair of Membership and Organizational Development (Bible Study). Besides the Women's Division Staff and Officers, writers include: **Lynn**

Hamric, Women's Division Board member and member of the Section on Membership and Organizational Development (Pledge Service); **Becky Dodson Louter**, Executive Secretary of the Deaconess Program Office, General Board of Global Ministries (Quiet Day Service for A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial); and **Susan Henry-Crowe**, Dean of the Chapel and Religious Life, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia (Mission Study).

Rise! Shine! Glorify God! offers a variety of experiences to United Methodist Women who seek Bible Studies, mission encounters, and special programs as they learn and experience more about praising God. The Women's Division and its writers hope you will find these programs uplifting as well as useful in the upcoming year. **In addition, the poster for A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial is again included for your use.**

PLANNING SUGGESTIONS

We hope that you will find this *Program Book* to be inviting, helpful, challenging, and easy to use. Below are some suggestions for planning and doing programs.

1. **Read completely** through the program several weeks before it is presented. Begin to think about whether you will use the program as it is written, adapt it, or divide it over two meetings.

2. **Plan ahead!** Meet with the group planning the program several weeks in advance. Decide on the purpose, content, and process of the program. Order materials from the Service Center at least six weeks before the event. Also allow enough time for resources ordered from other places to arrive. Ask others to participate in presenting the program at least two weeks before the gathering. Start advertising the program as soon as possible. Give it a title that will attract everyone's interest.

3. **Help everyone to be prepared.** Be sure each participant has a copy of the complete program, so that she knows how her part fits into the whole. Practice the program as a group beforehand. If this is not possible, ask everyone to practice her own part at home. Practice unfamiliar music or hymns with the group on the day of the presentation.

4. **Arrange the meeting room space before the group arrives.** In consultation with other leaders, decide how to arrange the chairs and where to put the worship center, displays, and other equipment that may be needed for the program. Set up audiovisual equipment, if it is to be used, and make sure it is working properly.

5. **Be sure to use and refer to United Methodist Women's resources.** Take every opportunity to mention *Response* and *New World Outlook*, as well as the three annual mission studies, books from the Reading Program, and other materials.

6. **Keep United Methodist Women's PURPOSE before the group.** Link the content of the programs to our PURPOSE and the four mission emphases: Spiritual Growth, Education and Interpretation, Social Action, and Membership Nurture and Outreach. (See *Handbook: Focus on Local and District Units 2005-2008* for more information on the mission emphases.)

7. **Allow time for the group to discuss follow-through or action** related to the program's content. Ask: How can we keep on thinking about this concern? What needs to be done? What can be done?

8. **Use the helpful program planning form** on page 75 of this book. Duplicate it for use by the group that plans the program.

9. **Evaluate the program after it is presented.** Provided in the back of the book are forms that can be sent to the editor of the program book. Please send these in addition to doing an evaluation for your own use.

We pray that you and the members of your unit will be moved and challenged as you follow the program presentations. We hope that you will be inspired to reach out to others as you renew your commitment to mission locally and in other countries. United Methodist Women provide many opportunities to spread the gospel of God's love to everyone—especially to women, youth, and children.

About the Authors

Alice Belton of Hercules, California (California/Nevada Annual Conference), is Vice President of the Women's Division and Chair of the Section of Finance. She is also a director on the General Board of Global Ministries. She has served in numerous capacities within United Methodist Women, at local and district levels, and is also a Certified Lay Speaker. She is a retired computer analyst, a former schoolteacher, and currently works as a part-time computer science instructor at a local community college. She is the mother of two adult children.

Lois M. Dauway, Assistant General Secretary of the Section of Christian Social Responsibility for the Women's Division, oversees programs focusing on children, youth, family advocacy, constituency education, conflict resolution, development education and action, public policy, racial justice, the United Nations and international affairs, women's concerns, and ecumenical work. A world traveler, she has also worked with the National Council of Churches USA (NCC) in monitoring programs and policies of the NCC for the presence of racism, sexism, and classism; assisting the constituency in working toward inter-ethnic solidarity; and developing strategies for eliminating barriers to inclusiveness in church structures. Ms. Dauway is a recently elected member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches.

Darlene Dawes of Hummeltown, Pennsylvania (Central Pennsylvania Conference), is an elementary school teacher who substituted for 25 years before beginning a six-year permanent teaching career for first and second graders. As Vice President of the Women's Division Board, and Chair of the Section on Membership and Organizational Development, she is noted for her leadership qualities and her exceptionally pleasant personality—perfect for a Women's Division leader as well as an elementary school teacher. She and her husband, a United Methodist pastor, have two adult children and dote on their two granddaughters.

Josephine Deere of Coweta, Oklahoma (Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference), has been a member of United Methodist Women and its predecessor organization since 1968. She is the Recording Secretary for the Women's Division Board. In 1975, she was elected president of Church Women United in her home city, the first Native American to hold the position. She has served in almost every position within the United Methodist Women organization, and is a wife, mother, and grandmother.

F. Lynn Hamric of Cottondale, Alabama (Alabama-West Florida Conference), works in the Engineering Department of the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. She serves on the Women's Division Section on Membership and Organizational Development. Raised on a farm, she loves animals, surrounds herself with pets, and volunteers with rescue and adoption agencies. Among her many hobbies are traveling, reading, sewing, cooking, sports, and good music. She says, "I have a very personal, deep, and sincere spiritual life."

The Rev. Susan Henry-Crowe is Dean of the Chapel and Religious Life at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. A member of the United Methodist Judicial Council, she has also served as director of the South Carolina Conference Council on Ministries, and for nine years as a pastor in South Carolina. A key aspect of her work at Emory has been to foster inter-religious dialogue in the ever-changing world of religious pluralism.

Becky Dodson Louter, a second-generation deaconess, is Executive Secretary of the Deaconess Program Office. In that role, she is responsible for the administration of the Offices of Deaconess (135 active, 118 retired), Home Missioner (new, with two active persons), and Home Missionary (discontinued, with 23 active, 86 retired), all of whom practice lay ministry. In addition, she represents them at the national level of the denomination, while maintaining and training a community of professionals who are committed to service under The United Methodist Church. She and her husband stay busy as the proud parents of John, born November 10, 2005.

Jan Love, Deputy General Secretary of the Women's Division, is a native of Montgomery, Alabama. Raised in a United Methodist clergy family, she has been involved in the church and church-related organizations all of her life. Her present duties encompass oversight of and responsibility for all the personnel, work, and assets of the Women's Division. She holds a Ph.D. in Political Science (International Studies), and served as associate professor of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of South Carolina before coming to the Women's Division. Prior to that, she served for 10 years as associate professor of the Department of Government and International Studies; during much of that time, she was graduate director of International Studies for the department. She is the author of *The U.S. Anti-Apartheid Movement: Local Activism in Global Politics* (1985), and the recently released *Southern Africa in World Politics: Local Aspirations and Global Entanglements (2005)*, as well as dozens of articles in academic and professional publications. She and her husband are the parents of a daughter in college and a son who is finishing his Ph.D. program.

Andris Y. Salter, Assistant General Secretary for Administration, facilitates international ministries, scholarship, and human resources and manages the Service Center, the distribution center for all General Board of Global Ministries publications, including those of the Women's Division. Ms. Salter is widely sought as a workshop leader, especially on racism, financial promotion, goal-setting leadership development, and membership. In addition to her professional career, she is interested in ministry with young women and children, and was recently accepted as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for children.

Cheryl Trent is Assistant General Secretary for Membership and Organizational Development. Besides providing oversight to staff in these areas, she is also responsible for the implementation of such training events as the Regional Schools and Conference Schools of Christian Mission and the Leadership Training Event (LTE). A native of Virginia, Cheryl is a diaconal minister who has served on the staff of local churches in Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, and Virginia and as a home missionary to the Alaska Conference.

Kyung Za Yim of East Northport, New York, is President of the Women's Division and Vice President of the General Board of Global Ministries. She is also a commissioned deaconess of the church. She is proud of being a United Methodist Woman, and is passionate about peace and justice. A leader in many areas, she continues to lead Korean United Methodist Women training events. She says that without United Methodist Women training events, she would never have attained the level of leadership that she presently enjoys. In addition, she writes for Korean United Methodist Women *Program Books*. She and her husband are the parents of two children.

The Journey: Through the Wilderness to the Promised Land

BY SUSAN HENRY-CROWE

This program is adapted from a sermon by the Rev. Susan Crowe Henry, Dean of the Chapel and Religious Life, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia.

Focus Image: Build an altar throughout the service. Cover a card table (or one of similar size) with a plain dark (crimson or brown) cloth. Begin with an undecorated metal or wooden cross centered on the table, with small rocks or stones strewn around it. At points indicated during the program, add the following items or something similar that suits the occasion to the altar:

- A low, wide bowl of water
- Several small green plants with no flowers on them
- Flowers—not a formal arrangement but a single rose or, if possible, wildflowers or garden flowers.
- Several candles of varying sizes and heights (light them if possible).

Focus Statement: Since the beginning of history, people have been rising and journeying forward—to escape danger and leave pain behind them—always toward a better life ahead. In following Jesus' call, we move toward new life through our faith journey from pain and despair to peace and grace.

Focus Scriptures: Isaiah 35:1-10; Mark 7:24-37

Program

Prayer *(in unison)*: God of Creation, Lord of the Ascension, we know we carry our burdens of the past into the future. We know we lay mantles of injustice on others even when we don't mean to do it. We know that we cannot get to the Promised Land without crossing the wilderness, that rocky barren uncharted expanse of life. We come to you with eyes to see, ears to hear, and tongues to tell your message. Help us keep our hearts warm and let us be like the watered desert, where your grace and mercy flourish in abundance.

Hymn: "Behold a Broken World" #426, "For the Healing of the Nations" #428, *United Methodist Hymnal.*

Scripture: Isaiah 35:1-10

Leader: Imagine you are a tourist in a restaurant in Bethlehem. You are talking with others over breakfast about Palestine, Israel, and the state of war and peace in the Middle East. Some of your companions are Japanese, visitors from halfway around the world who have come to this ancient town to participate in a nonviolent peace demonstration on behalf of the Palestinians. As you look outside the window, you see young Israeli soldiers armed with machine guns and tanks stationed nearby. As you talk to your Japanese friends, three men and a woman, you are struck by the similarities to another war. Whether or not you lived through it, you know about the American bombing of Hiroshima in 1945. Today, there is controversy over whether or not it was necessary, but that is not our issue here...we want to journey toward peace. We are considering the things that we do in moments of fear and panic, and the things that we don't do—and how they may bring us closer to the true spirit of Jesus Christ.

Reader One: After World War II, Father P. Siemes, a German priest living in Nagatsuki, Japan, with his order, the Novitists of the Society of Jesus, gave his written account of the bombing to an American soldier who returned to the United States and shared it with many people. Father Siemes wrote that the people of Hiroshima streamed out of the city, ahead of the "garish light" and the wave of heat caused by the bomb, and its aftermath, the fire that devastated the entire city.

He said: "...I see nothing more than that brilliant light....Perhaps a half-hour after the explosion, a procession of people began to stream up the valley from the city. The crowd thickens continuously. Their steps are dragging....There are wounded soldiers, and mothers carrying burned children in their arms. From the farmers in the valley comes word: "Our houses are full of wounded. Can you take the worst cases?" This went on for days, and the brothers cared for the wounded and dying with few and finally no medications.

Father Siemes makes the case that, except for rare instances, the Japanese civilians did not retaliate against Americans or Europeans living in the area. This statement was true throughout Japan, but from what he saw, he determined that the majority of the people did not feel called to retribution. Remember, these were the civilians, not Japan's soldiers or its leaders.

Reader Two: Move forward in time. Over 50 years have passed since the end of World War II. During most of that time, the Middle East has lived in tension and conflict. The national interests of outsiders—Great Britain, the United States, and the Arab states—have had strong influence on the persistent conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians. Only in the last two decades have the Palestinians systematically and repeatedly retaliated against what, for over a century, they have perceived to be unreasonable attacks with unjust consequences. For

decades, they were driven from their homeland in a series of actions, climaxing in the Six Days War of June 1967. Twenty more years passed before the onset of the Intifada, which arose as a response to these actions. The Palestinian community defines the Intifada as "a defense of the Palestinian people against Israeli oppression."* From the Palestinian perspective, its people are rising from the dust of defeat to reclaim the land that they consider to be rightfully theirs.

(As the following is read, bring the bowl of water and small green plants to the altar.)

Reader Three: Isaiah 34:2, and following, offers an account of Yahweh's anger: "For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: For he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter." The description of total desolation, when the land is "burning pitch," that "shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever." Isaiah tells us that this is God's judgment on humankind—it gives us pause, it causes us to reflect on our own intentions and purposes. We think of our own negligence and participation in injustice. What have we to gain by our inhumanity to others? We think about our own selfishness and apathy. We love our comfort, and at one time we felt secure in our isolation, but no longer! The nightmares that have followed 9/11 are reminders of the sins of omission, moral negligence, apathy, and oversight that create within us a moral distance. This neglect causes us to dry up and wither. It creates within us a desert—our hearts are becoming like the desert.

(Place the rose or flowers on the altar as the following is read.)

Reader Four: In the dry desert, there is no water, nothing to quench the thirst. The storms are full of sand, not life-giving rain. The city of Bethlehem is surrounded by desert, through which one must pass. For Israelites going home to the Promised Land, there was no way but through the desert. What almost defeated them was not disbelief in God, but the 40 years of journeying through the desert wilderness. Alone with God, they had time to face themselves for a long time. In the beginning, they were tempted to turn back, as they were drawn more to what they remembered rather than what was promised. Then God offers them water and greenery, and for the long-wandering Israelites, the desert blossoms like the rose (Isaiah 35). It blossoms abundantly, and "rejoices with joy and singing." God creates miracles—for those Israelites long

* Intifada is defined in Palestinian sources as an Arabic word meaning to shake off or to shiver because of fear or illness. It also means abrupt and sudden waking from sleep or unconcerned state, and politically it came to symbolize the Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation (beginning in 1987). (http://www.alhewar.org/INTIFADAH PAGE/the_new_intifidah.htm)

ago, and in the hearts of people today. God opens our eyes to injustice, to misery around us, to the journeys of other people whose cultures and ideas are not easy for us to understand. God opens our hearts as a rosebud unfurls to become the extravagantly perfumed rose of the watered desert.

(Add the candles to the altar during the hymn.)

Hymn: "Breathe on Me, Breath of God" #420, verses 1-3, *United Methodist Hymnal.*

Litany

RIGHT: *God, Creator of miracles, who lights our journey, and stays the course with us.*

LEFT: *Help us to emulate Jesus, who set the example for us with his 40 days in the wilderness.*

RIGHT: *As we perceive nation-conquering around us, let us see it as it truly is.*

LEFT: *God, let us remember that the other side of this coin is vanquishment and displacement.*

RIGHT: *As we struggle to rise from the darkness of desolation and destruction,*

LEFT: *God, help us also to rise from the pain of hatred and injustice toward others.*

RIGHT: *As the Israelites struggled through the wilderness, learning to forget the past,*

LEFT: *God, help us rise to meet the unknown future, daring to leave the familiar behind.*

RIGHT: *As the desert blossoms, the crocus blooms, weak hands are strengthened, and the fearful heart is made strong,*

LEFT: *God, help us turn our nightmares into dreams, and our weapons into ploughshares for peace.*

RIGHT: *As our eyes are opened, our ears are unstopped, and our tongues are loosened,*

LEFT: *God, help us to continue our journey, rising ever upward toward the light of peace and justice that you demand of us.*

Action: Distribute cards and pens. Ask each participant to write down one way in which she can work toward peace in her community, work place, or other local site. Is there a way that she can reach out to people of other cultures who may be living with racial/cultural biases? She must consider how one injects the concepts of hope, love, and reconciliation into interaction with a person of another culture. Ask each woman to report back at the next meeting what (if anything) she has been able to do, and if she thinks her actions may lead to improvement or change in a situation. *Suggestion:* Not everyone will want to do this, but perhaps some of the women may choose to adopt it as a short-term personal program. Please remind them that this is also about equality of persons, not just an experiment of one person deciding to help another. It will take longer than one month to be able to live out these premises.

Hymn: "Let There Be Peace on Earth" #431, *United Methodist Hymnal.*

Prayer of Departure

All: God, who lights our lives, and scatters the darkest shadows,

Be with us as we journey across through the wilderness. Protect us from the rocks and thorns and pitfalls of evil.

Be our guide, our light, as you were for the Israelites wandering through Sinai's wilderness. Enhance our understanding of other cultures. Help us recognize the difference between those who rain terror on innocent people for the sake of evil, and those who retaliate out of frustration. Lord, help us to realize that there is truly a difference. Then, Lord, help us to share our understanding with others so that we become the children of your watered desert, your light shining through us as we become like the rose of Sharon.

In Christ's name,
Amen.

Preparation

1. Purchase 3"x5" cards plus pens for the Action.
2. Gather suggested materials in order to build the altar.
3. Ask several people to be the readers; ask them to come to the program at least 30 minutes early so they can rehearse.
4. Arrange chairs in a semicircle or two rows if necessary.
5. Make copies of the program and distribute to the readers.
6. Ask someone to distribute cards and pens (and collect them after the program).

Who Is My Neighbor?

BY ANDRIS SALTER

Focus Scripture: Luke 10:25-37 (The Message Bible)

Focus Hymn: "Amazing Grace" #378, *United Methodist Hymnal*

Focus Image: Cover a table with a beige or white cloth. Place some bricks, a cross, and one or more candles on it.

Program

Focus Scripture

Reader 1: Just then a religion scholar stood with questions to test Jesus. "Teacher, what do I need to do to get eternal life?" He answered, "What's written in God's Law? How do you interpret it?"

He said, "That you love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and muscle and intelligence—and that you love your neighbor as well as you do yourself." "Good answer!" said Jesus. "Do it and you'll live."

Looking for a loophole, he asked, "And just how would you define 'neighbor'?"

Reader 2: Jesus answered by telling a story, "There was once a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho. On the way he was attacked by robbers. They took his clothes, beat him up, and went off leaving him half-dead. Luckily, a priest was on his way down the same road, but when he saw him he angled across to the other side. Then a Levite religious man showed up; he also avoided the injured man.

"A Samaritan traveling the road came on him. When he saw the man's condition, his heart went out to him. He gave him first aid, disinfecting and bandaging his wounds. Then he lifted him onto his donkey, led him to an inn, and made him comfortable. In the morning he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, "Take good care of him. If it costs any more, put it on my bill—I'll pay you on my way back.

"What do think? Which of the three became a neighbor to the man attacked by robbers?"

"The one who treated him kindly," the religion scholar responded, Jesus said, "Go and do the same."

Peshawar

Leader: As a member of an ecumenical team of women on a solidarity visit to Pakistan, we had the opportunity to experience firsthand the meaning of this parable.

After a long tiring day full of debriefings, dialogues, and good food, the team arrived in Peshawar, a six-hour drive from Lahore. With little more than four hours of rest, we were off for another full day of meetings and the same six-hour drive back to Lahore later that evening. We began the day in dialogue with Bishop Mano Rumalshah, episcopal leader of the Peshawar Diocese, and his wife. We then worshipped with seminary students on campus, then set off to see the Christian community in Peshawar. We also visited an Afghani refugee camp, met with earthquake survivors, saw the mission work, and ended the day with a discussion with the Diocese church women.

Reader 3: Peshawar is near the Afghani-Chinese border. Its population is over two million people, including 100,000 Christians. It guards the eastern end of the Khyber Pass en route to Kabul in Afghanistan. It is also one of the frontier towns with a tribal culture.

Peshawar has been in the news recently due to rioting and destruction over the caricatured image of the Prophet Mohammed. Pakistan is an Islamic state and takes its faith seriously. Muslims pray five times a day. Any desecration, disrespect, or blasphemy against its holy figures is an automatic death sentence.

Reader 4: Bishop Rumalshah shared his vision for the Christians in Pakistan. In a well-documented video on the work of the Diocese, we recognized the importance of the church's presence in this northwest frontier province of Pakistan that borders Afghanistan. Even as we were in conversation with Bishop Rumalshah, he was called away because the brother of one of his staff had been arrested on false charges and requested the intervention of the Bishop.

In the last few years, the church has responded to several emergencies, including the influx of Afghani refugees some years ago when the war broke out in that country. The church has always been there. The earthquake in the Pakistani part of Kashmir severely damaged part of the Diocese. Balakot was almost leveled to the ground, and the church had immediately sent teams of volunteers and staff from its institutions to provide care. They continue to do this, even though there are few Christians in that region.

Regarding the future of Pakistan and particularly the plight of Christians there, Bishop Rumalshah stressed that the church has an important role to play as a reconciling force in a troubled land. He strongly believes that engaging with Muslims in dialogue and conversation is the vocation of the church.

Refugees

Reader 1: Located within the Diocese of Peshawar is a refugee camp housing 54,000 refugees. The refugee camp initially had a population of 98,000 people (or 16,000 families) but 44,000 people have left, either returning to Afghanistan or becoming part of the Pakistani community.

The Pakistani government provides water, electricity, a hospital, and schools. The refugee camp has one hospital with four basic health units; educational facilities; four primary schools for girls (3,000 students) and ten primary schools for boys (6,000 students). There are 32 hand pumps and 28 service tanks.

Reader 2: Girls go to school through the sixth grade and are discouraged from going further. A vocational center for girls and women is available for those desiring sewing skills. Each woman who completes the program receives a certificate and a sewing machine. Their products can be sold in the marketplace and through Afghani families living in Germany. All projects are sold at fair market price. There are no restrictions on the refugees; they can move about freely and are considered part of the community.

On Fridays camp leaders lead a community meeting, during which issues and problems are discussed and addressed. Information from the government can be shared during these weekly gatherings.

Good Samaritans

Leader: At the conclusion of a long day celebrating the end of the ten-day visit and preparing for the six-hour drive home, the team was treated to a visit to the marketplace. There we joyfully talked about the teas we had drank throughout Pakistan. We had enjoyed several types of tea in many settings, but the pink tea in Peshawar truly piqued our interest and tastebuds. Inquiring about the best place to purchase tea, we were told that this market had the largest variety of vendors and the best selection of tea in the area and was on the way as we headed out of town.

Reader 3: As we waited for the shoppers to return, three young boys approached our van and attempted to engage us in cordial conversation. It was obvious we were not from the area. There we sat in our big, comfortable van waiting and talking as we watched people walk by. We also looked like what we were—strangers in an unfamiliar land. What we did not realize was that while we were being distracted, a purse with important documents was being removed.

The journey had taken us through many interesting experiences, but this was unexpected. Four strangers—with four different countries, cultures, languages, and experiences—encountered several Good Samaritans in the most surprising way. In need, people usually turn to the church, friends, family, and community. We turned to an offer of kindness and compassion from a community of strangers.

Reader 4: A community came together that night to help four women whom they had no obligation to help. Race, gender, religion, culture, and income level did not enter into the situation. No one questioned our motives, identities, or statements. Everyone simply mobilized. One little boy came forth to testify as a witness; his word was sufficient, and the community elder accepted his statement.

In the midst of fear and concern, the faithful came together to perform a miracle of grace and mercy. Within a few hours we were praising our awesome, loving, compassionate Saviour.

The moral: God doesn't ask us to be successful, only faithful. God provides for us in our faithfulness.

Questions

1. During which times have you experienced Luke 10:25-37?

2. When were you the robber, priest, Levite religious person, Good Samaritan? Please explain.

3. Have there been times when God burst on the scene with a miracle so that you had to rejoice? Describe them.

4. Have there been times when you felt like a stranger needing to depend on the kindness and compassion of strangers? Please explain. God truly is good all the time. Amen.

Prayer: Lord, teach me to be generous:

To give and not to count the cost;
to fight and not to heed the wounds;
To toil and not to seek for rest;
to labor and to seek no reward,
Other than that of knowing that I do
Your Holy Will.

(Prayer of St. Ignatius of Loyola, which could have been the prayer of the Good Samaritan himself)

Response: "Amazing Grace" #378, *United Methodist Hymanl*

Process

1. Divide the readings among the leader and four readers.

2. All join in on the prayer and the response.

Resources

Response, Special Issue on India and Pakistan, May 2005. #3672 ($1.75)

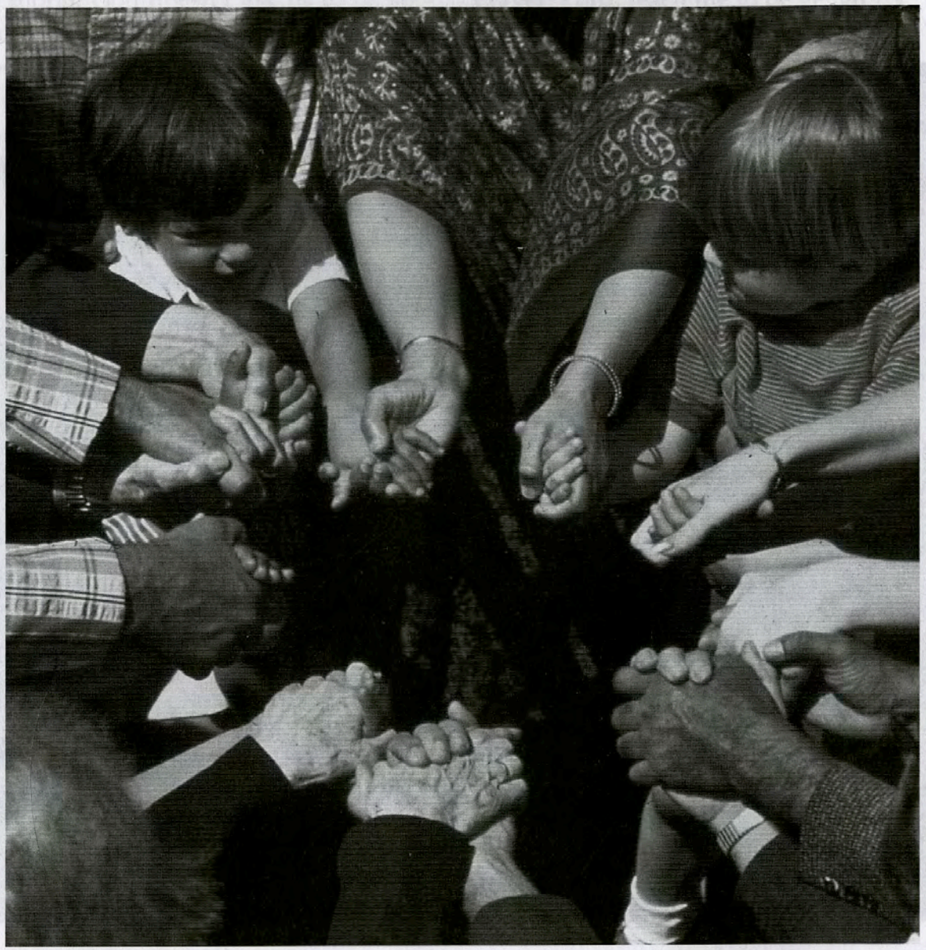
Prayer Calendar 2006. #3655 ($5.00)
2007. #3707 ($8.50)

New World Outlook, Special Issue on India and Pakistan, May-June 2005. #3683 ($3.00)

*Resources listed with stock numbers are available from the Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 7820 Reading Road, Caller No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Order online: www.scorders.org. Telephone: 1-800-305-9857; Fax: 1-513-761-3722; E-mail: scorders@gbgm-umc.org. Prices do not include shipping and handling. See page 80 for information on how to figure these additional costs.

"Fear Not, Pray Earnestly": Time for Soul Searching

by Kyung Za Yim



"Fear Not, Pray Earnestly": Time for Soul Searching

BY KYUNG ZA YIM

Focus Image: Place soft colored cloth or scarves on a table. On the table, place several different colors of candles and objects that remind us of a calm, peaceful, and soothing atmosphere, like sea shells, petals, a small green plant, a basket of soft small pom-poms, and a wind chime.

Focus Scriptures: Joshua 1:9; Psalm 46:10

Focus Statement: In a world of frenzied human activity and often stressful and violent exchanges, we are not always mindful of the need for earnest prayer. Jesus retreated to the garden or the desert for quiet prayer and reflection as well as fervent supplication. He invited his disciples to pray and stay awake. Fervent group prayer can be productive as a way of claiming or reaffirming our individual and collective faith. Listening for God's voice during meditation will give new strength to women of faith in mission.

Program

Opening Hymn: Verse 1 of "Tu Has Venido a la Orilla (Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore)" #344, *United Methodist Hymnal (#90, Korean-American United Methodist Hymnal)*

Lord, you have come to the lakeshore,
looking neither for wealthy nor wise ones.
You only asked me to follow humbly.

Refrain:
O Lord, with your eyes you have searched me,
and while smiling, have spoken my name.
Now my boats left on the shoreline behind me,
by your side, I will seek other seas.

Reader: *Read Focus Scriptures aloud.*

Leader: *Read Focus Statement aloud.*

Prayer
All: O God, we come to you with many thoughts and troubled hearts from the busyness of our lives. We bring you our fears and our known and unknown stresses. Help us to breathe again in the life-sustaining way through our connectedness to you and to each other. Help us to listen to you and to each other. Fill us with the gentle spirit of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Leader: As we pass the basket around, please take a pom-pom.

Seekers of the Soul

Seeker One: Jesus taught us to persevere in prayer, saying, "Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks the door will be opened." (Luke 11:9-10)

Seeker Two: The song of David's trust in God alone reminds us to wait in silence. He sings, "For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall never be shaken." (Psalm 62:1-2)

Seeker Three: Can we stop and listen to God's voice of reassurance? Are we willing to allow time in our lives for healing to take place through the Holy Spirit working in our midst? Can we channel our fervent collective soul-searching in the form of a prayer meditation to hear God's answer to our cries?

Leader: Let's form small groups of three or four. Find two or three people whose pom-poms are of a different color than yours. When your group is formed, begin talking briefly about when you last had a silent meditation and also fervent prayer. Is it easy in your daily life to stop and pray? What happens when you listen carefully to God in prayer?

(Sound the wind chime after five minutes.)

Now in each group, collect your pom-poms and offer them at a central space. Take turns talking about steps you will take to do some soul-searching as a member of United Methodist Women and how you will take time in your daily life to pray and meditate. Only the person speaking should take a pom-pom from the central space and feel the soft soothing sensation of the pom-pom. Each person should take about two minutes. Let silence fill the collective space briefly before you return to your own space.

(Sound the wind chime after seven or eight minutes.)

Let us now bring our meditative senses together to engage in a community prayer, which in the Korean spiritual practice is called *Tong-sung Gi-do*. This prayer is done together simultaneously, converging energy in a rhythmic way, with varying degrees of earnestness. For some it becomes a pleading cry for spiritual renewal and healing; for others it is a faint rhythmic chanting of soul-seeking and praise. Done collectively, the space can produce a renewed source of energy with the Holy Spirit connecting to our community in a powerful way. We will begin this exercise of community prayer with guided calls from me.

Reader: "O Lord, God of my salvation, when, at night, I cry out in your presence, let my prayer come before you; incline your ear to my cry!" (Psalm 88:1-2)

Leader: *(Sound the wind chime and read each point below between 30 seconds of prayer/chanting.)*

- As you are led by the Holy Spirit, offer words of petition, your fears, your reservations about all that lies ahead in your life and work. Pray in your most comfortable and natural way, repeating words that reassure or are most dire for you.
- Let the sound of community prayer be the strength that fortifies your petitions and praises. Channel your prayer and chants together to solidify the earnestness of this community. Let the sound around you blend in with yours. Let your prayer blend in with the prayers of others.
- Listen for a moment to the prayers, the cries, the rhythmic chanting of this community and know that God is listening with an ever-powerful presence.
- Move toward silence as you offer thanks and praise for this opportunity to engage in collective meditation in prayer. Silently give thanks.

(Sound the wind chime a final time.)

Our God has heard our prayers and our cries, in sound and in silence. Praying together is a powerful source of strength as well as comfort and peace in our soul-searching process. Let us move into our closing hymns of sending forth.

Closing Hymns: Verse 1 of "Beneath the Cross of Jesus" #297, *United Methodist Hymnal* (#471, *Korean-American United Methodist Hymnal)*

Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand,

The shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land;

A home within the wilderness, a rest upon the way,

From the burning of the noontide heat, and the burden of the day.

Verse 1 of "Have Thine Own Way, Lord" #382, *United Methodist Hymnal* (#327, *Korean-American United Methodist Hymnal)*

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!

Thou art the Potter, I am the clay.

Mold me and make me after Thy will,

while I am waiting, yielded and still.

Leader: As we exercised the collective voicing of our needs, the Spirit helped make them known. Our heavy hearts are lightened and our souls filled with God's grace.

Prayer *(in unison)*: God of mercy, you have raised us from despair and given us inner strength. We are free from the depths of fear. We can face the light of day. We will go remembering to fear not, for we can do all things with God who strengthens us. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Preparation

1. Arrange chairs in a circle, so the participants can face one another.

2. Create a worship center by placing a table in the middle of the circle. Cover the table with soft colored cloths or scarves. Add a cross, Bible, candles, a basket filled with colorful pom-poms, sea shells, flower petals, and a small green plant.

3. Assign a leader and three "seekers" in advance to rehearse their parts.

4. Provide a wind chime for the leader to sound as indicated.

5. Prepare someone to read the Focus Statement and Focus Scriptures.

6. Make copies of the program and provide hymnals for everyone.

7. If possible, have a pianist and keyboard.

8. Prepare a microphone if needed.

Resources

Pearce, Mary Kathryn, *Concerning Prayer* (*Study Guide* by Maxine West). English #3589; Spanish #3590; Korean #3591 ($2.50)

Boyd, Malcolm, & Talton, Chester, *Race and Prayer: Collected Voices—Many Dreams*, Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 2003. #2219 ($17.95)

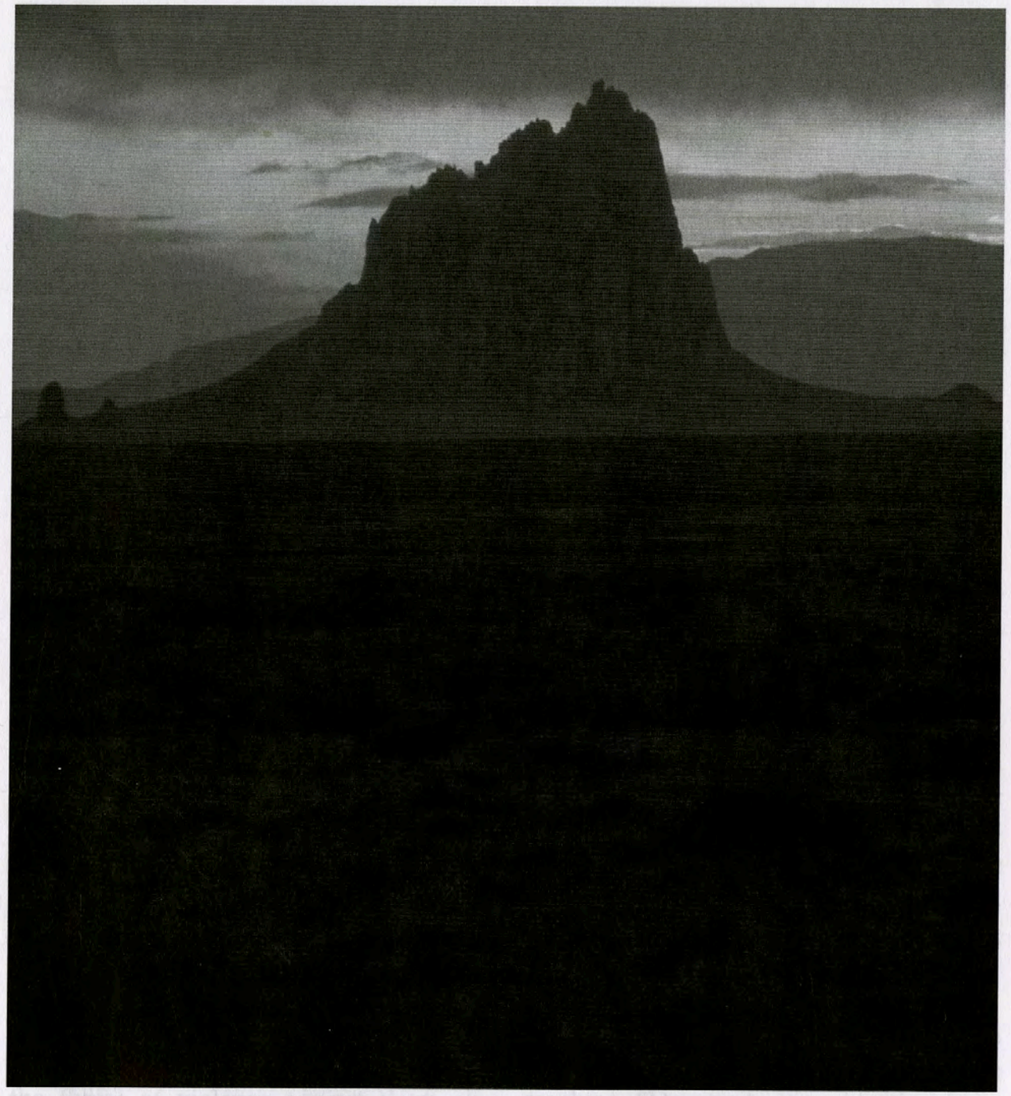
Response, Special Issue on the Prayer Life of Jesus, January 2005. #3668 ($1.75)

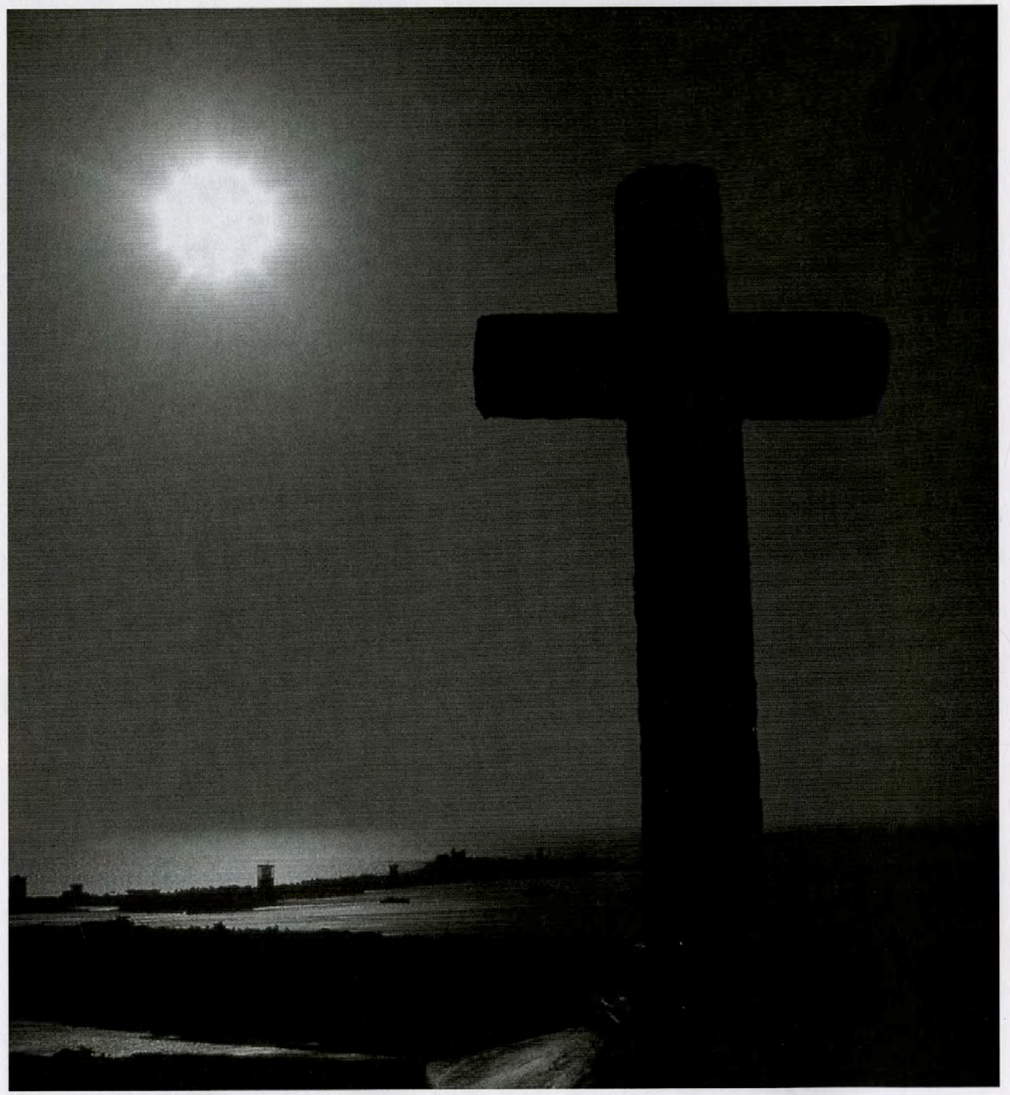
Prayer Calendar 2006. #3655 ($5.00)
2007. #3707 ($8.50)

*Resources listed with stock numbers are available from the Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 7820 Reading Road, Caller No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Order online: www.scorders.org. Telephone: 1-800-305-9857; Fax: 1-513-761-3722; E-mail: scorders@gbgm-umc.org. Prices do not include shipping and handling. See page 80 for information on how to figure these additional costs.

Lord Be Glorified

by Jan Love





Lord Be Glorified

BY JAN LOVE

Focus Scriptures: John 15:8-11; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15; Psalm 106:1-5

Focus Image: Cover a table with a white or other single-color cloth. Place a cross in the middle, at the base of which place ordinary objects from everyday life. For example, money, a checkbook or a credit card, a package or can of food, a piece of clothing, pictures of family members, a Bible, knitting or crochet needles, a CD or DVD, a hand-held computer, a book or magazine, pens or pencils, etc.

Focus Statement: Our ordinary, everyday activities and habits make a statement about our faith convictions. Our witness to the love and grace of Jesus Christ is embodied in how we live our lives and make decisions about small and large matters that affect ourselves and others. One guide to living within our families and communities—including our work in mission with women, children and youth—is to think of how the ordinariness of our lives can be used to glorify God.

Program

Recently while channel-surfing late at night, I got engaged in watching "Fiddler on the Roof," the musical that made a big splash on both stage and screen. I've been engrossed before in this movie about Tevye and Golde, the 19th century Ukrainian Jewish couple with five daughters. They earn their living as dairy farmers. One theme throughout the story is how the first three daughters find and marry their true loves—a tailor, a radical teacher, and a Christian whose vocation is not yet known. Just as the third couple sets up their home, the entire Jewish community gets driven out of the area by the threat of violence against them all. Religious themes infuse the movie as Tevye, a devout Jew, has an ongoing dialogue with God.

This time around, one particular scene caught my attention. It comes in the middle, after the marriage of the eldest daughter, Tzeitel, to Motel, who is a very fine tailor. Motel wants to build his business by buying a sewing machine, which no one in the village has ever seen before. When it arrives, everyone gathers at Motel's shop to see the new device operated by a foot pump (the kind my grandmother used). Motel obliges the crowd by demonstrating what this contraption can do.

When he notices the rabbi watching in awe, Motel invites him to bless the machine. "Do you know a blessing for a sewing machine?" Motel asks, wondering if it is appropriate to consecrate unknown objects. The rabbi pauses to think, and as

the group grows quiet, he offers a blessing in Hebrew.

Blessing a machine! I never thought about it before. I've heard blessings for babies, new homes, groups of people, couples getting married, churches or particular rooms in churches, and, of course, food—but never a machine. Motel's point, however, seemed to be that he wanted to consecrate the mechanism by which he would help feed his family and provide services to his community. (I suppose the equivalent for me would be a blessing for my computer, the device I use daily to accomplish my work in the world.)

Perhaps Motel wanted to remind himself that God's work should infuse his own human work. Stated differently, perhaps this young tailor wanted his work to glorify God. John 15:8 states that God "is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples." Are there any machines in your life, any mechanisms or processes essential to your daily work, which need to be blessed and used more effectively for "bearing fruit" for Jesus Christ?

The passage 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 states that we glorify God by our generosity of sharing. How do you share your life, love, talents, and gifts? Does being an active member of United Methodist Women enhance your ability to share?

Response: "Lord, Be Glorified" #2150, *The Faith We Sing*.

We sang this simple song in the closing worship of the May 2006 Assembly in Anaheim, California. I remember the first time I heard the tune. It stuck with me in a way that many do not. The song's simplicity underlies its elegance.

Renowned writer Kathleen Norris once said that the way we bathe a child or discuss family matters at the dinner table reveals who our God is. So does how we treat the poor and how we react to our enemies.

How do we practice Christianity? Does our way of life tell the story of our belief in and devotion to Christ? Is God glorified by how we raise our children, undertake our daily work, and pay our bills? Would those around us really "know that we are Christians by our love?" Is God glorified as we sit through committee meetings for United Methodist Women, as we raise money for mission, as we minister with the least, the lost, and the lonely in our communities and across the world?

Moreover, do we see God glorified in others, even those with whom we may disagree or who are different from us? Is our supportive community as United Methodist Women strong enough that we catch glimpses of Christ in each other? Glimpses of the glory of God in each other?

Perhaps the answers to all these questions is "yes!" If not, meditate and reflect with each other on how more aspects of our ordinary lives could glorify God, spreading the news more joyfully and confidently both to loved ones and strangers that God is love, hope, justice, and joy.

Prayer

LEADER: *We glorify you, God,*
ALL: *For your love-lavished creation.*
LEADER: *We celebrate you*
ALL: *For your God-breathed life in us.*
LEADER: *We magnify you*
ALL: *For Christ-endowed mission.*
LEADER: *We respond to your call*
ALL *To rise and shine as a sign of God alive,*
LEADER: *As a signature of God present,*
ALL: *Making a new earth and a new heaven.*

(From the closing worship of the 2006 Assembly)

Closing

As we United Methodist Women fulfill our purpose to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ, to develop creative and supportive communities, and to minister both near and far through mission, may we be glimpses of Christ for each other and the world. May our lives, homes, churches, and work in the world glorify God.

Resources

Dorothy C. Bass, Editor, *Practicing our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People*, Jossey-Bass, 1997. On 2003 Reading Program; check in your UMW conference library.

Patricia D. Brown, *Paths to Prayer: Finding Your Own Way to the Presence of God*, Jossey-Bass, 2003. (#1900) $19.95

Ray Buckley, *Dancing with Words: Storytelling as Legacy, Culture, and Faith*, Discipleship Resources, 2004. (#1970) $12.00

J. Ann Craig, *Traditional Beliefs of United Methodists*. English #3693; Spanish #3694; Korean #3695 ($3.00)

Neenah Ellis, Editor, *If I Live To Be 100: Lessons from the Centenarians*, Three Rivers Press, 2004. #1928 ($13.00)

Max Lucado, *Traveling Light: The Promise of Psalm 23*, Reading Program 2006. #1910 ($17.00)

Tilda Norberg, *Ashes Transformed: Healing from Trauma*, Upper Room Books, 2003. #1971 ($13.00)

James Haywood Rolling, Jr., *Living Sacrifices: For Those Dying to Rise to a Life Worth Giving*, Reading Program 2006. #1960 ($16.00)

Nibs Stroupe and Caroline Leach, *O Lord, Hold Our Hands: How a Church Thrives in a Multicultural World*, Westminster John Knox Press, 2002. #1967 ($19.95)

*Resources listed with stock numbers are available from the Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 7820 Reading Road, Caller No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Order online: www.scorders.org. Telephone: 1-800-305-9857; Fax: 1-513-761-3722; E-mail: scorders@gbgm-umc.org. Prices do not include shipping and handling. See page 80 for information on how to figure these additional costs.

How We Are "Raced"

By Lois M. Dauway

Focus Image: On a table, place at least five open shoeboxes on their sides. It would be nice to cover the boxes with pieces of colored paper. Into a box, place either a doll or a picture of a child. It would be ideal if you could find a set of dolls representing various racial and ethnic groupings, including European American or Caucasian. If no dolls are available, pictures representing various groupings may be substituted. You may also create paper chains to drape over the boxes.

Focus Statement: The purpose of this program is to help United Methodist Women explore the ways in which they are taught at an early age about the nature of race and racism.

Focus Hymn: "Help Us Accept Each Other" #560, *United Methodist Hymnal.*

Focus Prayer: Dear Lord, You have blessed us to be born with pure hearts. Yet somewhere along the way we are exposed to things that divide us from one another. We learn to place our expectations of ourselves and of others in boxes that seek to limit our potential. Help us, Lord, to step out of the boxes of prejudice and racism that constrain us and others. We ask this in Your Name. Amen.

PROGRAM

Opening Prayer and Verse 1 of Focus Hymn

Leader: Among the issues we will be exploring is an intriguing question raised by Dr. Carolyn Johnson, a former Women's Division president. The question is "How were you raced?" How were you taught about who you are and how that impacts your relationships with those around you—whether they are like or different from you?

For the Women's Division there have been so many women whose names are known and unknown, who have done very courageous things. It means that all of us United Methodist Women have to ask ourselves a series of things and be willing to deal with those very honestly.

One, we really have to know our own personal story in how we were "raced." Now people will ask how you were r-a-i-s-e-d. I want you also to think of how you are r-a-c-e-d. And then you have to say to yourself, "Which aspects of that am I going to find, to correct, to let go, or whatever?"

Another issue is: "Do I have the willingness to act when action is needed, even if that action is something I have to do by

myself?" Sometimes the moment when you will have to speak is not a moment when the rest of your sisters will be with you, and so if you find yourself afterward in a "woulda, coulda, shoulda" position, then you did not act at the moment. The Division still has to have moments when it acts corporately, obviously. But there are also times when we have to be courageous in the moment.

We also have to continue to say that we will try to continue to discover and understand the complexities and the dynamics of racism. We have to continue to engage with each other and with other people around the issue of racism. We have to continue to learn.

(Dr. Carolyn Johnson, former President of the Women's Division, addressing the Women's Division Directors' Meeting, October 2004)

Verse 2 of Focus Hymn

Reader 1: Our Bible study will invite us to dig deep-to explore the question for ourselves and for the organization of United Methodist Women.

Let us begin with a basic premise: if you were born in this country or if you immigrated and have lived here for more than five minutes, you have been "raced." *(Repeat that last sentence.)* Racial oppression in this country has occurred historically by the identification and treatment of some groups (African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans) as "less than."

Sexism, ageism, and classism are examples of additional forms of systemic oppression. That is, specific groups are systemically identified or treated as less than or different because of their gender, age, sexual/affectional preference, and role or job status. It is important to recognize that we are called to struggle against all forms of oppression. To paraphrase Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "None of us are free until all of us are free."

The focus of this Bible study is on racism because racism hits us at the visceral level. If you call a man a sexist, unfortunately, he is likely to laugh and say, "Yes, my wife is always telling me that!" The challenge to his behavior is minimized. If, however, you call someone a racist, he or she tends to react with real anger. In other words, a charge of racism hits hard. Learning methods for addressing racism can provide us with a model for teaching the process of becoming multicultural. Many of the methods and discoveries can be applied to efforts to confront sexism, ageism, classism, etc.

Reader 2: Before we move further, let's look at some definitions so that we can approach this Bible study on some common ground.

- The harboring of negative feelings toward people of other groups is personal-level prejudice and is often the result of and reinforces institutional racism.
- The institutionalization of oppression has several levels.

- At the personal level, whites and people of color consciously or unconsciously learn to be either perpetuators of oppression or perpetuators of the victim position. No human being is born with racist attitudes and beliefs.

Are you familiar with the song "You Have to be Carefully Taught" from the Broadway musical/movie "South Pacific"? Then you understand that we are "raced at an early age" (carefully taught).

Children of African descent, for example, are "raced" with a particular set of coping skills to maneuver their way around and past the barriers that society presents. The coping skills for young Latinas are different from those of Native American girls or a young immigrant from Asia. Young white girls are also taught skills, "raced" to make it in society. This may include privilege. The point is that we are all developmentally impacted by issues of race in this country.

Reader 3: Such information is acquired involuntarily at an early age through a conditioning process that is both emotionally painful and harmful.

There are personal costs for all groups. This is not to say that the emotional experience of Native Americans and whites are the same. It is not. One way, however, that whites can empathize with the pain of oppression for target groups is to acknowledge the pain that results from their own prejudice. Reclaiming one's ethnic background is part of this process. For example, people of Irish descent should learn about the discrimination perpetuated against the Irish in early history in Boston, Massachusetts, with signs posted that read "No dogs and Irish men allowed" signs. Does that communicate? I cannot underscore enough that the challenge is not to compete around the question of whose pain is deeper or more valid. We are committed to soothing the pain of all who hurt. It is counter-productive and indeed, offensive, to attempt to compare pain. Pain hurts: that is enough to spur us to action.

Two more definitions and then you get to go to work!

- Racism is the systemic oppression of people of color. It occurs at the individual, interpersonal, institutional, and cultural level. It may be overt or covert, intentional or unintentional. Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves having the power to carry out systemic discriminatory practices through the institutions of our society.
- *Modern racism* suggests that the character of racial prejudice in America has changed. Rather than engaging in overt manifestations of racism, many people currently use non-race-related reasons to continue to deny racial ethnic persons equal access to opportunity.

Modern racism is an interesting term. Here's an example of how it works. In

Boston, forces against school desegregation in the sixties did not say that they did not want their white children to go to school with black children. What they said is that they were against busing. Do you get the point? It was a plausible but false argument given the fact that children had traditionally been bused to school, and with desegregation the busing distances would be reduced.

Reader 4: Now we are going to look at the Bible regarding the issue of being "raced." The present racial ethnic groupings are not analogous to the kinds of oppression that occurred in biblical times. We can, however, learn from examining some biblical stories.

Many would argue that modern racism is not modern at all. Let's look at the Book of Daniel.

> Jerusalem was conquered by the Babylonians. King Nebuchadnezzar commanded that "Israelites of the royal family and of nobility, young men without physical defect and handsome, versed in every branch of wisdom, endowed with knowledge and insight and competent to serve in the king's palace" (Daniel 1:1, 3-4)

Be trained to serve the needs of the king. Daniel was such a man, and because he was an astute and forthright man, he began to rise within the governmental structure. Daniel was a Jew. He was "raced" as a Jew, a person on the margin but raised as a person of privilege. An interesting dilemma.

Babylonian bureaucrats of the era began to resent Daniel's favored position within the structure and became determined to get rid of him because he was not "one of them." The bureaucrats recognized that it would be unwise to engage in overt anti-Jewish behavior and therefore plotted to use institutional procedures to eliminate their rival. They plotted to establish policies and procedures that they knew Daniel, a very devout Jew, would be unable to comply with. The bureaucrats convinced the king to mandate that all who did not worship the golden idol, fashioned in the image of Nebuchadnezzar, would be thrown into the lion's den. They knew that Daniel would worship only his God (because that is how he had been "raced") and would inevitably have to suffer the penalty for disobeying the king. The bureaucrats never engaged in using racial slurs or displaying "Babylonians Only" signs. They simply used the structures of the times to keep those who were different from assuming too much power.

Does that communicate?

Another example. Think of a young African American girl hearing the passage from the Song of Solomon 1:5, "I am black, but comely." For young people who may believe that every word of the Bible was written by God, instead of by human beings in a particular social context, this passage could communicate that even God thinks people of color are less beautiful, less worthy, even rejected.

Leader: Now it is time for you to do some reflection. At your table, you will see sheets of paper with a biblical passage and a few questions. I invite you and your table group to read the passage and respond to the questions. You will have approximately 15-20 minutes for discussion, and then we will take a few minutes to hear from your table. There are five different passages. Each table should have only one passage. It is best if there are enough copies for each person at the table. After everyone has had the opportunity for table discussion, we invite you all to share insights before the plenary.

Passages and Questions

Esther 3:1-6

1. How was Mordecai "raced"? How were the servants "raced"? Haman?

2. Did you note that although Haman had a conflict with one person, his solution was to destroy all Jews? Can you identify instances in which whole groups of people are characterized by the actions of one member of the group?

Deuteronomy 17:14-15

1. How were the Israelites "raced"?

2. These were people who had been oppressed, and now they were occupying another people's land. How did the manner in which they were "raced" inform their relationship with others?

3. Do you find it ironic that those who have been oppressed could so easily exclude others?

Matthew 2:16-23

1. How did the circumstances of Jesus' birth and youth—Herod's edict and the nomadic life it created—impact the manner in which Jesus was "raced"?

2. How do you believe that the manner in which Jesus was "raced" in childhood affected his adult ministry?

Exodus 1:8-14

1. How were the Egyptians "raced"? As a result, how were the Israelites "raced"?

2. How were structures used to perpetuate the status of the Israelites? Do we have systems in the church to "keep people in their place"?

Luke 10:29-37

1. How do you believe these different men were "raced": the man who fell among robbers, the priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan?

2. How did the way they were "raced" inform their response to this crisis?

Leader: Thank you for your reflections. We hope that you will continue to struggle with the question of how we are "raced" and the implications of that for the organization of United Methodist Women.

Verses 3 and 4 of Focus Hymn

Preparation

1. Put this Bible study in the context of worship. Begin and end with prayer and song.

2. Have separate handouts for each text. This would include the text, written out, and the question. Divide participants into at least five small groups to explore each of the five texts. If you have a large number of participants, several small groups may explore the same Bible passage.

3. Distribute the quote from Carolyn Johnson.

4. Process is one-and-a-half to two hours.

Process

1. The leader shares the introduction on "how we are raced" and reads the excerpt from Carolyn Johnson, former President of the Women's Division. (15 minutes)

2. Four readers share the readings as indicated.

3. The leader invites small groups to read Bible passages and discuss the questions in the context of "how we are raced." (25 minutes)

4. Allow ample time for discussion of all five passages (40 minutes or more). The leader should be prepared to respond to questions and concerns that arise, and to help build on insights from one group to the next.

5. Invite just a few women to share very briefly what they have learned from the Bible study. (10 minutes)

Racial Justice Program, Women's Division
475 Riverside Dr. Room 1502, New York, NY 10115
212-870-3732; www.gbgm-umc.org/umw

LLAMADO A LA ORACIÓN Y EL SACRIFICIO • 2007

A CALL TO PRAYER & SELF-DENIAL • 2007

The Covenant Window

Sylvia Smyth, a retired missionary who lives in the Brooks-Howell Home, Asheville, North Carolina, designed this stained glass window for the Brooks-Howell Memorial Chapel that was dedicated in 2004. This special offering supports the pension and retirement of women like Sylvia. Photo of stained glass window by Leon Strunk.

Simply Loving

Retirement of Deaconesses and Missionaries



Sponsored by the Women's Division • General Board of Global Ministries • The United Methodist Church

Date **Time** **Place**

La Ventana del Pacto

Sylvia Smyth, misionera jubilada residente en el Hogar Brooks-Howell en Asheville, Carolina del Norte, diseñó esta ventana de vidrios de colores para la Capilla Memorial Brooks-Howell, dedicada en 2004. Esta ofrenda especial contribuye a la pensión y jubilación de mujeres como Sylvia. Foto de la ventana de vidrios de colores: Leon Strunk.

Simplemente Amor

Jubilación de Diaconisas y Misioneras

Auspiciado por la División de Mujeres, Junta General de Ministerios Globales, Iglesia Metodista Unida.

Fecha **Hora** **Lugar**

Fecha Hora Lugar

Shine, Shine, Shine!

By Darlene Dawes

Focus Statement: Through the oral tradition of Bible study, we will reflect on Scriptures that encourage us to shine and to discover ways we can show God's light in the world. This is a simple but spiritual way to study the Bible and understand what God is trying to say personally to each of us.

Focus Scriptures: Matthew 5:14-16; John 1:3-5; I John 1:5-7; and Isaiah 60:1-3. Using *The Message* by Eugene Peterson adds a new dimension to these Scriptures, but all versions may be used.

Focus Image: Create a worship area using an open Bible, various candles, and other light-giving items such as lanterns, flashlights, matches, and/or photographs showing light. Consider where you live and the women in your group to find meaningful items of light for the worship area.

Program

Leader: Shine, shine, shine. How are we to show God's light to the world? This Bible study method and variations on it have been used throughout many parts of the world. It is a variation on methods used by Christian communities in South America and Africa. There will be no discussion, but there will be time for you to think. There are no correct answers. May God's spirit speak to us as we experience Bible study in a new and meaningful way, the Oral Tradition Approach.

(Divide Bible study participants into groups and have them move into circles with their groups. Designate three readers for each group. You will lead them through the process.)

Reader 1: *Read slowly out loud the group's focus Scripture.*

Leader: *(Give everyone time to reflect for one minute.)* Recall the word or phrase that catches your attention. Now each person will share the word or phrase with their group without comment.

Reader 2: *Read slowly out loud the group's focus Scripture.*

Leader: Where does this passage touch your life, your community, your world today? Think about all the people you encounter, not just your own circle of friends. Using an "I" statement—not "the church thinks" or "the world thinks"—share your thoughts. Remember: "I" statements only. *(Allow three to five minutes per person.)*

Reader 3: *Read slowly out loud the group's focus Scripture.*

Leader: From what you have heard and shared, what does God want you to do or be this week? How does God invite you to change? *(Allow three to five minutes per person.)* Again, please use "I" statements. You may want to jot down a few notes while the person on your right is speaking so that you will remember how to pray for that person.

(Share as time allows, but make sure to leave time for prayer.) Now let each person pray for the person on their right, naming what was just shared, and continue to pray that daily prayer until the group meets again. If you'd like, your group may join hands.

(If you have a number of small groups and would like to allow personal sharing time from each group, please do so after the prayer.)

Response: "This Little Light of Mine" #585, *The United Methodist Hymnal.*

Benediction: May we leave this place ready to shine brightly by showing God's gracious love to all those we meet. May we remember Jesus and his powerful light as he served God in a new and daring way in his time. May the Holy Spirit enable us to brighten this world as we reflect the holy light of Christ. Go in God's brilliance and shine, shine, shine!

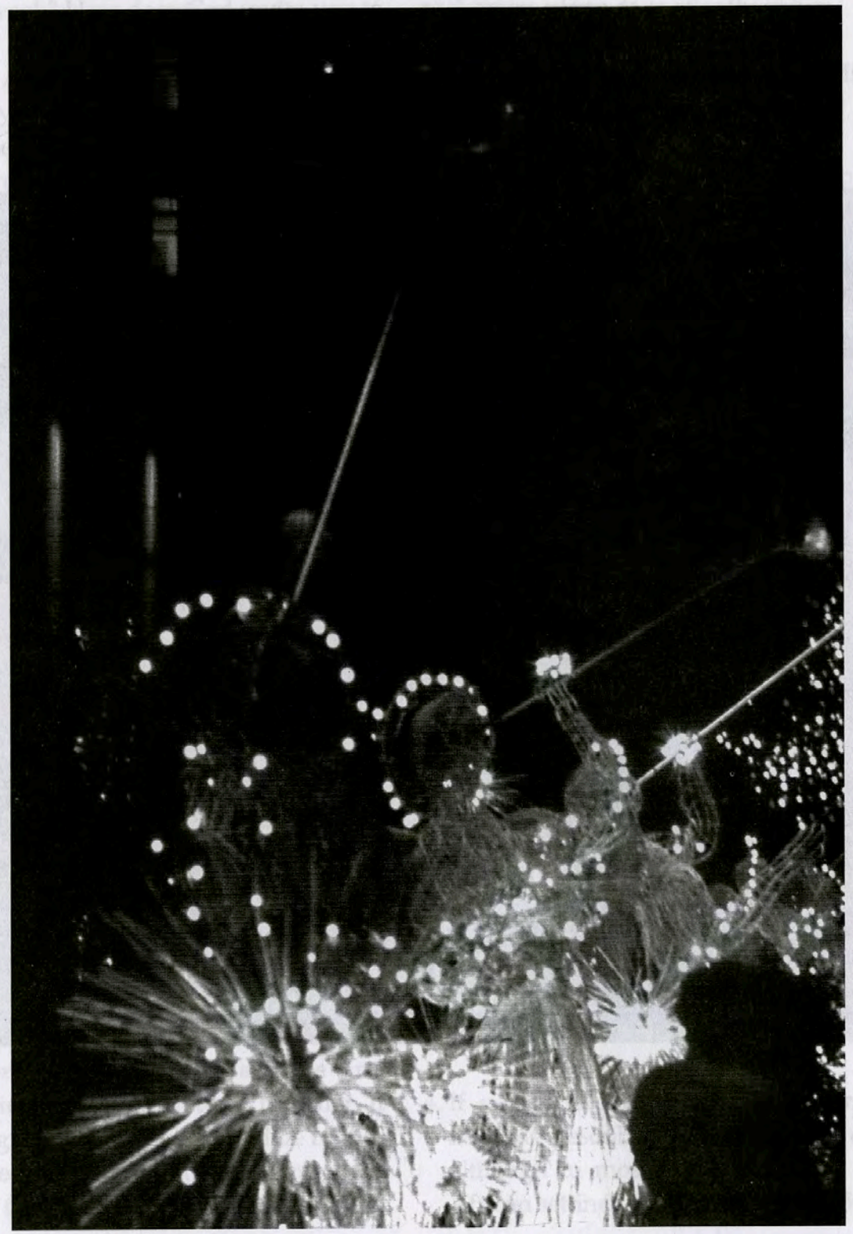
Preparation

1. Familiarize yourself with the Oral Tradition Approach. You will be leading the group(s) in this process. In giving directions, be brief. Do not elaborate, explain, or teach. That which is said is offered to the center of the group. Others should not respond to, critique, or build on what is said as if they were in a discussion group.

2. Before the program begins, think about your group and how you may want to divide them. If your group is six or less, you may want to form a circle and experience this Bible study together. If your group is larger, it would be best to divide them into smaller groups of three to five. Decide if you want each group to study a different passage or the same passage.

3. You will need three readers for each group. Contact them before the meeting with verses they will be reading and encourage them to use different translations (though it is not necessary). Although it is best to contact the readers ahead of time, you could ask them as they arrive. You would need to provide Bibles and the assignments so they could read them before the program begins.

4. If you would like, create the worship areas as described in the Focus Image, although in most South American and African settings it is not necessarily done.



Advent/Christmas: Our Place in the Story

BY CHERYL TRENT

Focus Image: Create a worship center with a purple, red, or white cloth (or multicolor with purple or royal blue-the colors of Advent), a Bible, Christ candle, the December 2005 issue of *Response* magazine; nativity and/or symbols of the season.

Focus Scriptures: Isaiah 40:3-5; Matthew 1:18-23; Luke 1:26-38; Luke 2:8-20

Focus Statement: The 2006 Assembly of United Methodist Women called us to RISE! SHINE! GLORIFY GOD! as we join hearts and clasp hands to address the critical needs of the world, share bread with the hungry, welcome the homeless, proclaim good news to the poor, radiate Christ's love (doing all we can to end the night of wrong), make known God's deeds among the people, and let all our works praise God's holy name. An awesome challenge! The biblical messages of Advent and Christmas remind us of the power of patience waiting for God to act. The Scriptures also show us that God's love for the world was revealed through the lives of ordinary people. Each of us has a place in the story.[1]

Program

Leader: *(Call attention to the worship center, describing the symbols as a reminder of preparation for and celebration of the birth of Christ.)* The December 2005 issue of *Response* magazine, "Advent: Prepare the Way of the Lord," reminds us how United Methodist Women "proclaim the good news" and prepare the way of the Lord through our ministries with women, children, and youth.

Centering: Using the *Prayer Calendar 2007,* read the names of mission projects and mission personnel with birthdays. Offer a statement of thanksgiving for the ministries and persons in mission. Unison prayer: *"O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray; cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels, the great glad tidings tell. O come to us, abide with us, our Lord, Emmanuel."*[2]

Introduce the program by sharing the Focus Statement.

Reader 1: *Read aloud Isaiah 40:3-5.*

Leader: The familiar and powerful words from Isaiah proclaim hope for the people of Israel. God will do a new thing in a way

that is dramatic, and the restoration will be not just for a chosen few but for all God's people. The people are implored to prepare and be ready to receive the change that will come.

Reflection: In this Advent season, where is God's revelation needed most? How do we need to prepare and be ready? *(Reflect silently for a few moments; invite responses.)*

Response: Verse 1 of "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus" #196, *United Methodist Hymnal*

Reader 2: *Read aloud Matthew 1:18-23.*

Leader: Mary is pregnant. Joseph is caught between his love for Mary and his righteous unwillingness to expose her to public disgrace. With Joseph on the verge of sending Mary away, God intervenes to dispel Joseph's fear. With the assurance of God's presence, Joseph boldly marries Mary, neither of them certain of what lies ahead.

Reflection: Share with a partner a time in your life when you felt led by God to rise and take a bold action amidst the disapproval of others, or an experience through which you felt the power of "Emmanuel: God with us" *(In a circle, ask every other person to share with the person on her left. Allow about three minutes for sharing. If time permits, invite one or two persons to share with the entire group.)*

Response: Verse 1 of "Love Came Down at Christmas" #242, *United Methodist Hymnal.*

Reader 3: *Read aloud Luke 1:26-38.*

Leader: We might imagine Mary, the young virgin handmaiden betrothed to Joseph as leading an uncomplicated life. No wonder she is perplexed by the words of the angel that she was about to conceive a child by the Holy Spirit—a son who would be the Messiah, of all things! Surely, the angel was mistaken. Not being of a royal family, Mary was the least likely woman to be so honored. But Mary soon came to realize that though she considered herself lowly, God would use her for the salvation of many!

Reflection: Share with your partner a time when you felt like Mary, an ordinary woman called by God for something extraordinary, when you could identify with Mary's words "Here am I, servant of the Lord, let it be with me according to your word." *(Ask the person who listened during the previous reflection time now to share. Allow about three minutes for sharing. If time permits, invite one or two persons to share with the entire group.)*

Response: Verse 2 of "Love Came Down at Christmas" #242, *United Methodist Hymnal*

Reader 4: *Read aloud Luke 2:8-20.*

Leader: The shepherds: humble folk just doing their job. Suddenly, in the stillness of the night, an angel appears in radiant light declaring that a child who has just been born is the long-awaited Savior! The shepherds are then told of the simple surroundings where the child can be found.

Acting immediately on this revelation, the shepherds leave their field and make their way to Bethlehem. They find and stand in awe of the child Jesus whom God had promised. The shepherds then return home, glorifying and praising God as they give witness to all they have heard and seen.

Reflection: To whom and where in our community do we need to bring good news of great joy and to give witness to the hope of Christ? *(After a few moments of silent reflection, invite responses to the question and record them on newsprint or chalkboard. Give each person a 3" x 5" index card and invite each one to make a personal commitment for the coming year to something that was named. Write the commitment on the card and keep it in a prominent place—in a Bible, as a bookmark, etc.—as a reminder. End the time of reflection with a brief period of silent prayer for each one to offer her personal commitment to God.)*

Response: Verse 3 of "Love Came Down at Christmas" #242, *United Methodist Hymnal*

Responsive Reading:

LEFT: *When the song of the angels is stilled*
RIGHT: *When the star in the sky is gone*
LEFT: *When the kings and princes are home*
RIGHT: *When the shepherds are back with their flock*
LEFT: *The work of Christmas begins:*
RIGHT: *To find the lost*
LEFT: *To heal the broken*
RIGHT: *To feed the hungry*
LEFT: *To release the prisoner*
RIGHT: *To rebuild the nations*
LEFT: *To bring peace*
RIGHT: *To make music in the heart*[3]

Unison Prayer: Creator God, as United Methodist Women, we are called to RISE! SHINE! GLORIFY GOD! as we seek to do God's mission. Like Joseph, may we not be afraid to act boldly in the face of adversity. Like Mary, may we radiate Christ's love in our faithfulness to your call. Like the shepherds, let us proclaim the good news and give witness to the ever-present signs of your love at work in the world. Amen.

Preparation

1. Secure materials needed: 3" x 5" index cards; Bibles (RSV or NRSV); newsprint and marker; materials for worship center, hymnals; *Prayer Calendar 2007.*

2. Prepare worship center as described in Focus Image.

3. Arrange chairs in a circle if possible.

4. Assign volunteers as Readers 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Resources

The Book of Christmas: Readings for Reflection During Advent and Christmas, Upper Room Books: Nashville, Tennessee, 1988.

Prayer Calendar 2007. #3707 ($8.50)

Response Magazine.

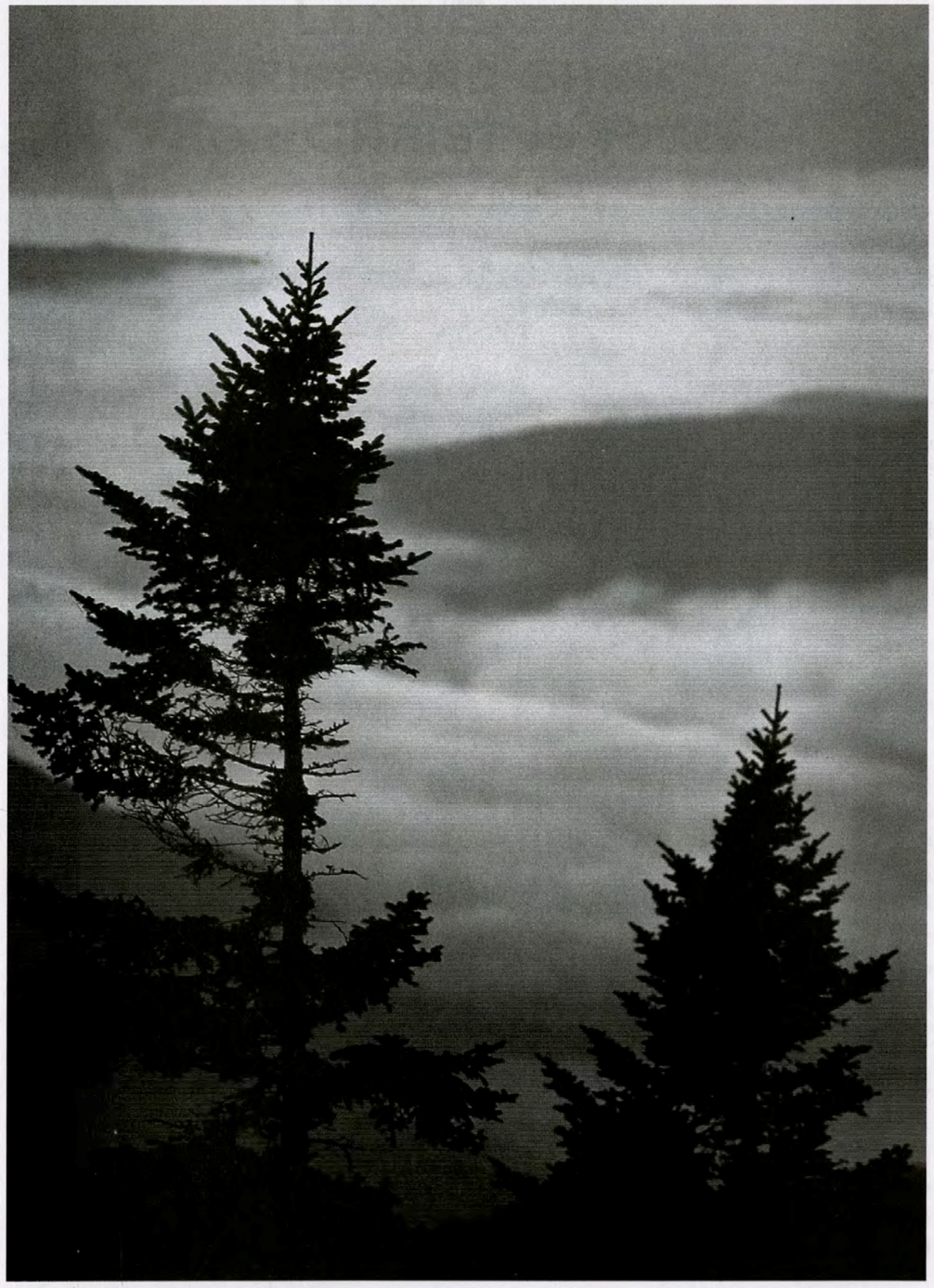
Notes

1. Adapted from Focus Statement, 2006 Assembly of United Methodist Women.

2. "O Little Town of Bethlehem", verse 4, #230 *United Methodist Hymnal.*

3. Adapted from *The Book of Christmas: Readings for Reflection During Advent and Christmas,* Upper Room Books: Nashville, Tennessee, 1988.

*Resources listed with stock numbers are available from the Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 7820 Reading Road, Caller No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Order online: www.scorders.org. Telephone: 1-800-305-9857; Fax: 1-513-761-3722; E-mail: scorders@gbgm-umc.org. Prices do not include shipping and handling. See page 80 for information on how to figure these additional costs.



Lent/Easter
Rise and Shine: For Christ Is Risen!

By Alice Belton

Focus Scripture: Luke 24:1-12 (Contemporary English Version)

Focus Image: Set up the worship table covered in white linen (Jesus' burial cloth). Use a piece or strip of purple cloth (to represent Lent). On the table place a large white candle (to represent the light of the world), a large rock or stone (to represent the stone that was rolled away from the entrance of the tomb), and cross (to represent the risen Christ).

Focus Statement: United Methodist Women are committed to helping women and children around the world to rise and allow their light to shine. Through our undesignated giving, we support many women and children stricken by poverty, sickness, and disease to rise (and roll the stone away) from their challenging situations and share the light of their powerful testimonies with other women.

Program

Leader: Early in the morning, on the first day of the week after the Sabbath, the women rose to visit the tomb where Jesus was buried. Upon arriving, they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. They looked around but could not find the body of Jesus. The women were greatly perplexed with this. They bowed their heads in the presence of two men who appeared before them dressed in shining garments. The two men asked the women, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen!"

Can you imagine the look on these women's faces when they heard this? I am sure for a brief moment doubt penetrated their spirits. We learn from the Bible that it took some real convincing of the disciples to believe that Jesus really had risen from the dead. Only after they became convinced of its truth did they become powerhouse witnesses for Christ. The women who arrived at the tomb early on that first Easter morning were the first to know because they were the last to give up hope. After the women had believed, they returned from the tomb to tell the eleven.

Point to Ponder: *Isn't it interesting that the moment they believed, they did not waste time just sitting around talking about what had*

happened but rose quickly with gladness to spread the good news that Christ had risen! Are you just sitting around talking about what happened or are you doing something to keep the light shining brightly for the whole world to see?

Reader 1: God never gives the body of Christ anything to keep for itself. Whether it is financial support, educational materials, medical supplies, shelter, food or clothing, God wants us to share our knowledge and resources with those in need.

Because of the faithfulness and courage of the million United Methodist Women who prayed, planned, organized, marched, petitioned, labored, and supported the work of the early missionary societies, the lives of countless individuals, especially women and children, have been changed. United Methodist Women continue to take the light of Jesus into the world.

When we let our light shine, we allow the Holy Spirit to work in and through us, and we become vessels of His love in action. The motivation for Jesus' life was always service. God can use a woman with the faintest light to go forth and shine among all nations by placing her at the service of others. Jesus preached, taught, healed, and performed miracles in order to help others. He poured out his life so that others might be saved. God has called you to serve others just as Jesus served others. God saved you so that you might serve others, and in so doing bring praise and honor to God's holy name. God loved us so that we might love others. He blesses us so that we might bless others.

Reader 2: This Easter season, we remember that if Jesus is no longer buried in a tomb, our desire to do missionary work should not be buried in a tomb either. Christ has risen and is reigning over all dominion. Jesus let his disciples know that they must rise to a new level, allowing their light to shine even brighter, not only among themselves, but for the entire world to see. We too, are to rise and allow our light to shine brightly to those who are still living in the darkness of a tomb.

1. This Easter season, what can I do to let my light shine for the kingdom of God?

2. How can I let my light shine in a world consumed by so much darkness?

3. I am blessed to be a blessing to others. What can I do to be a blessing to those in need?

Lent is a season of soul-searching and repentance. It is a season for reflection and taking stock. Lent originated in the very earliest days of the Church as a preparatory time for Easter, when the faithful rededicated themselves and when converts were instructed in the faith and prepared for baptism.

Our Easter celebration coincides with the beginning of spring, when the sun offers new warmth and the earth is ready to bloom again. The word "Lent" means "lengthening days" and the word "Easter" means "rising sun." The candle is a sign of Christ, "the light of the world." Rejoice! The darkness has been overcome by light.

Easter Vigil

Almighty God,
Through Jesus Christ you
overcame death
And opened to us the gate of
everlasting life.
Grant that we,
Who celebrate the day of our
Lord's resurrection,
May, by the renewing of your Spirit,
Arise from the death of sin to the
life of righteousness,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture: Luke 24:1-12 (Contemporary English Version)

Response

Easter Vigil #320 (see above), *United Methodist Hymnal.*

"He Lives" #320, *United Methodist Hymnal.*

"This Little Light of Mine" #585, *United Methodist Hymnal.*

"Halle, Hallelujah" page 21, *Global Praise 3.*

World Thank

Sustainers of Life

BY JOSEPHINE DEERE

Focus Statement: God is the sustainer of life, and we are to be supporters (sustainers of life) for others, thankful for whatever part we play in that sustenance.

Focus Scripture: Ephesians 5:20

Focus Image: Cover the worship table with a colorful scarf and/or shawl, a cross, an open Bible, and a basket of corn, beans, and squash.

Program

Prayer: Come, O Holy Spirit! Come to us who are poor in spirit. Bless us! Come and waken our hearts. Give us your peace, we implore you. O Holy Spirit, our minds are clothed in darkness. Enlighten us! Our hearts are filled with sorrow. Come and comfort us, sinners that we are. Cleanse us! *(Paraphrased from Choctaw Tribal Hymn #48 by the Rev. Harry D. Folsom.)*

Song: "Many and Great, O God, Are Thy Things" #148, *United Methodist Hymnal.*

Litany: In a time of centering we will act out the ceremonial, recalling that Christ is the center of creation, the central reality of God's plan for the world, the central reality of our lives as Christians. As we face each of the four directions, we will respond in prayer. Following each prayer, we will return to face the center, mindful each time that Christ can bring healing and salvation and by his Spirit renew the face of the earth. First, let us face a central point. *(All face the center.)* From the East, the direction of the rising sun, come wisdom and knowledge. Let us face east. *(All face east.)* Let us pray:

All: Enable us, O God, to be wise in our use of the resources of the earth, sharing them with justice, partaking of them in thankfulness. *(All face the center.)*

From the South come guidance, and the beginning and end of life. Let us face south. *(All face south.)* Let us pray:

All: May we walk good paths, O God, living on this earth as sisters and brothers should, rejoicing in one another's blessings, sympathizing in one another's sorrows, and together with you renewing the face of the earth. *(All face the center.)*

From the West come purifying waters. Let us now face west *(all face west)* and pray that the Spirit of God may again breathe over the waters, making them pure, making them fruitful. Let us pray:

All: We pray that we too may be purified so that life may be sustained and nurtured over the face of the earth. *(All face the center.)*

From the North come purifying winds. O God, you have been called the breath and wind of life. Let us face north. *(All face north.)* Let us pray:

All: May the air we breathe be purified so that life may be sustained and nurtured over the face of the earth. *(All face the center.) (From the Lakota prayer tradition presented by Christian Native American Women for World Day of Prayer 1981.)*

Leader: To the people of the Iroquois Confederacy, corn, beans, and squash—"The Three Sisters"—are the physical and spiritual sustainers of life. The three vegetables composed the main food supply of the great Iroquois Nation. These life-sustaining plants were given to the people when all three miraculously sprouted from the body of Sky Woman's daughter, granting the gift of agriculture to the Iroquois. Corn is tall, graceful, and strong. Think of a time in the past year when you have had to be strong for your family, friends, neighbors, UMW sisters, and others. Share it if you wish, either in a small group or individually, and be thankful.

Song: Verse 1 of "Hymn of Promise" #707, *United Methodist Hymnal.*

Leader: Beans twine around and lean upon corn for strength. The bean converts nitrogen from the air into food for the roots of the growing corn. Think of a time in the past year when someone provided food for your roots. Share it if you wish, either in a small group or individually, and be thankful.

Song: Verse 2 of "Hymn of Promise" #707, *United Methodist Hymnal.*

Leader: Squash rambles at the feet of her sisters and protects them from prowling enemies. Squash spreads as ground cover, its broad leaves shading the soil to preserve moisture and protect the roots of the taller plants while preventing weeds from taking hold. Think of a time in the past year when your local unit preserved the moisture and protected the roots of a program, institution, or individual. Share it if you wish, either in a small group or individually, and be thankful.

Offering: As we dedicate our World Thank Offering, may we remember that we are also sustainers of life and that through this offering we reach out to other women, children, and youth to sustain them in their life struggles.

Song: Verse 3 of "Hymn of Promise" #707, *United Methodist Hymnal.*

Prayer: O Great Spirit, whose breath gives life to the world and whose voice is heard in the soft breeze, we need your strength and wisdom. Cause us to walk in beauty. Give us eyes always to behold the red and purple sunset. Make us wise so that we may understand what you have taught us. Help us learn the lessons you have hidden in leaf and rock. Make us always ready to come to you with clean hands and steady eyes so that when life fades, like the fading sunset, our spirits may come to you without shame. Amen.

If you have Native Americans within your group, you may ask if they have creation stories that they would be willing to share. Native Americans are generally environmentally conscious; you may therefore want to look at environmental issues affecting your area. In the creation story, God saw that it was good; may we too see the "good," be thankful, and provide for the continuation of the "good."

Preparation

1. Get enough offering containers for each member. The containers can either be the banks available from the Service Center or labeled cans or jars.
2. Have a copy of the World Thank Offering leaflet for each member.
3. Have flute music playing in the background as people arrive.
4. Gather items for the worship center.
5. Prepare a display of other World Thank celebrations.

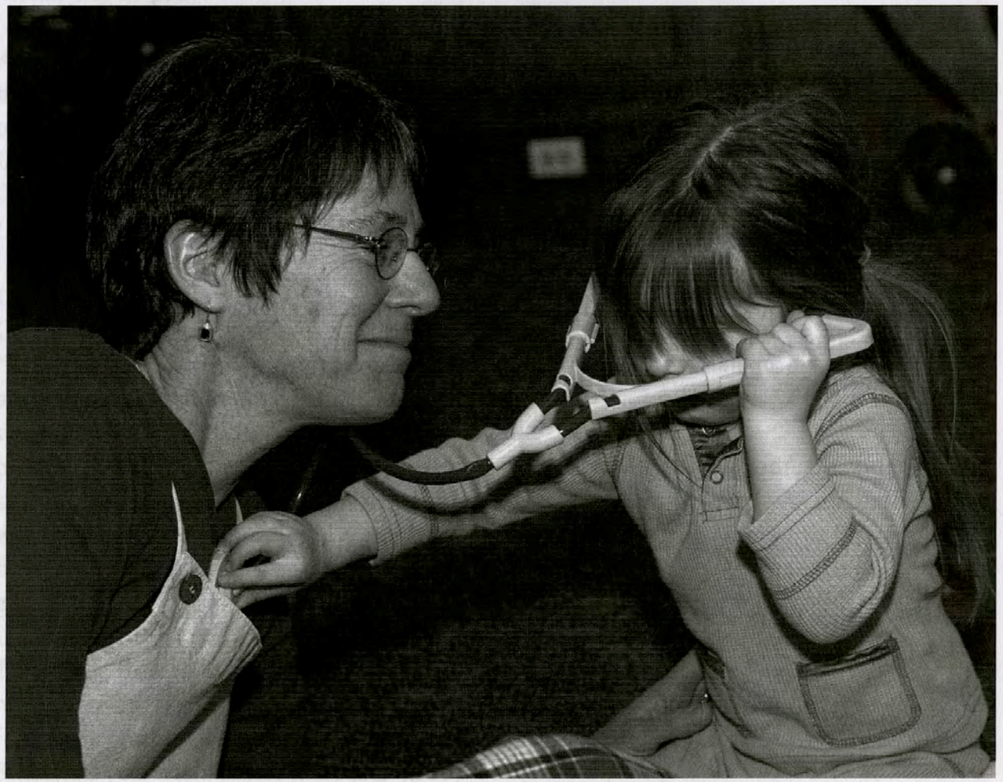
Resources

World Thank Offering Box. #1731 (40¢)

Label. #5105 (Free for postage and handling)

Leaflet. English/Spanish #5706; Korean #5311 (Free for postage and handling)

*Resources listed with stock numbers are available from the Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 7820 Reading Road, Caller No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Order online: www.scorders.org. Telephone: 1-800-305-9857; Fax: 1-513-761-3722; E-mail: scorders@gbgm-umc.org. Prices do not include shipping and handling. See page 80 for information on how to figure these additional costs.



Quiet Day Service for A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial: The Fruits of Love

BY BECKY DODSON LOUTER

Focus Image: Put a centerpiece representative of harvest/bounty—a bowl of fresh fruit, a vase of garden flowers, a flowerpot with flowers in bloom—on a small table covered with a simple cloth. Surround this with objects brought by participants that represent times they have felt love and gratitude to God for someone else's actions in their lives.

Focus Scripture: Isaiah 32:16-18; Micah 6:8

Focus Statement: Today let us remember the deaconess motto: "I serve neither for gratitude nor reward, but from gratitude and love; my reward is that I may serve." Service comes freely as an expression of our appreciation of the love and grace God has given to us all. It is a way of fulfilling our calling and purpose in this world. Through service comes a bountiful harvest to be enjoyed not necessarily by those who sow but by all who witness this labor given freely through love and gratitude.

Program

Invitation and Welcome

Leader: We come together today for A Quiet Day Service in observance of A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial. We welcome the presence of God among and within each of us. Let us rejoice and embrace this time together made sacred through God's presence as experienced in fellowship. May we experience the nourishment that comes only from the reception of the Holy Spirit. Let us now take time to clear our minds and hearts so that we may be receptive to this nourishment.

Silent Meditation: *The participants may meditate in silence. "An Invitation to the Holy Spirit,"* #335 United Methodist Hymnal, *may be read as a focus for the silent meditation.*

Opening Hymn: "For the Fruits of this Creation" #97, *United Methodist Hymnal. (This hymn may be sung or read.)*

Reflection

Leader: Each year, as United Methodist Women, we engage in this special observance in order to connect spirituality with mission, praying with giving, and ourselves with our brothers and sisters around the world. The Call to Prayer and Self-Denial Offering this year is directed toward the support of deaconesses and

missionaries who are set apart for lives of service to others.

Today, we will share how we have been touched by the service of others and hear the voices of those in service.

The theme, "The Fruits of Love," recognizes love as the basic element that produces the bounty we enjoy. All that is good and bountiful is nourished and given freely based upon the love we all receive from God. It is with joy and gratitude that we share in the opportunity to be in service and in the bounty of God's harvest.

Let us now share what we consider the fruits of love, times when we have felt love and gratitude to God for the service of others in our lives. What touches us most may be as simple as a helping hand to lift us up when we needed it, a kind word when our heart was aching, an embrace when we felt unloved and unlovable, or a listening ear when we needed someone to talk to. Some acts of service change our day, while others change our lives.

Sharing Experiences of the Fruits of Love
Those who have brought items that represent "The Fruits of Love" may individually share what moment their item represents with the full group, within a smaller group, or in pairs, depending upon the size of the participant group. (As an alternative to bringing an item, each person may be asked to write on an index card a word or words that represent when they have been a recipient of "The Fruits of Love." The cards can then be shared in the same manner as any other item.)

Biblical Insights
Reader 1: Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field. The effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places. (Isaiah 32:16-18)

Leader: In a world that at times seems to be filled with injustice and unrest, peace may be found as a beautiful wildflower is found in the midst of desolation. Through commitment to justice, as illustrated by the lives of those in mission service, one seed, one person, can bring beauty and peace with justice where there was none before.

Reader 2: He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)

Leader: Of all the things that we place value on in this world, from those of monetary worth to those that feed our pride, God asks only that we "do justice and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God." While some are set apart for service in a full-time vocation, as Christians and in particular as United Methodist Women, we are all called to mission service. We fulfill this calling through direct service, financial support, and most importantly through prayer.

Hymn: "Faith, While Trees Are Still in Blossom" #508, *United Methodist Hymnal. (This hymn may be sung or read.)*

Stories
Leader: We share today the bounty that is a gift of God's love shared in this world by acts of service. While tracing their roots back to Phoebe in Romans 16:1-2,* deaconesses have been in the Methodist tradition since 1888 with the establishment of the Office of Deaconess. Together, deaconesses form a covenant community that is rooted in scripture, informed by history, driven by mission, ecumenical in scope, and global in outreach. This is a community of laity who has responded to the call of God in their lives and has been commissioned by The United Methodist Church to full-time ministries of love, justice, and service. The ministries may be in a church-related vocation or helping profession. Current ministries include but are not limited to issues related to prison, environment, refugees, immigration, healthcare, education, homelessness, women and children, youth and families, senior adults, peace with justice, working poor, and a wide variety of church and community ministries.

*(*I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae, so that you may welcome her in the Lord as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well.)*

Group: The ministries reflect the commitment to "function through diverse forms of service directed toward the world to make Jesus Christ known in the fullness of his mission, which mandates that his followers:

1. Alleviate suffering;
2. Eradicate causes of injustice and all that robs life of dignity and worth;
3. Facilitate the development of full human potential; and
4. Share in building global community through the church universal."

The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2004

Leader: Now let us share in the words of those called to service as deaconesses and hear of their ministries past and present. *(Note: Consider inviting deaconesses to join your service. The names of deaconesses may be found in your conference journal or by contacting the Deaconess Program Office.)*

Reader 1: *Deaconess Lynn Sloan Barnes—Director of Outreach Ministries and Director of the Tri-County Health Resource Center—Western North Carolina Annual Conference*

Since being commissioned in April of 2005, I have established Tri-County Health Resource Center, a nonprofit ministry designed to help those lacking sufficient health insurance to gain access to medical care and medications. We serve predominantly the working poor, bringing hope to the hopeless and relief to the suffering. We treat our brothers and sisters in need as we would want to be treated, just as Jesus taught us to.

A young gentleman was referred to me by the local crisis ministry. Having injured

his back, he was unable to work. Having no health insurance and no income, he couldn't pay to see a doctor. He was about to be evicted. This had depressed him to the point that he was having suicidal thoughts. I was able to get him an appointment with a mental health professional and another with a family practitioner at no cost to him. We provided transportation to both. When I dropped him off at his house, I asked if he was going to be okay if I left him there alone. He smiled and replied: "Yes. You have given me hope again. Thanks."

Reader 2: *Deaconess Juliet Choi—Research Chemotherapy Nurse, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center—New York Annual Conference*

While patients are getting treatment with chemotherapy, I allow them to vent their fears, worries, and concerns. I support them with prayer and the living Christ's words, providing them comfort through trying times.

Reader 3: *Deaconess Shay Blackwell—Church & Community Worker, Kingdom House Family Center—Missouri East Annual Conference*

She came in dragging two small children. They all looked worn out, defeated, alone, frightened. There was no light in her eyes, no liveliness to her movements.

She started bringing [her children] to the Center—have you ever walked the city looking for a home with two tiny children? And she would stay and talk...and talk.... It's been several years now. She works for the Center and she and her children have a church home. In her Sunday school class recently someone asked, "When did you start to come alive?" She said she had never given it any thought before, but she knew exactly when it happened (as she shared her answer with me, it gave me good goose bumps). "It happened when I walked into the Family Center."

Reader 4: *Deaconess Rosalina Salyers—Teacher, Forest Heights United Methodist Church Preschool—Tennessee Annual Conference*

The children assigned to me to teach this year are the youngest since I became a deaconess in 1966. I've watched this group from babyhood when they were in cribs and now for the first time they sleep on mats on the floor. It seems as if the older I get, the younger the children assigned to me are. I have been blessed to share their joy as they explore their environment and be a part of their growth and development.

Reader 5: *Retired deaconess Helene Hill (resident of Brooks-Howell Home in Asheville, North Carolina) was profiled in the book* For Such A Time As This *(stories of deaconesses, available in 2007).*

Helene points out that when one works on behalf of the poor and needy, one does not have the recognition of status or money. But this has not been a major concern for Helene. To this day Helene focuses on the needs of the poor, disabled, and those who have suffered injustice. Her advice is not to lose track of this main principle: to alleviate suffering. To love a life of service, no matter the social reward, is enough.

Reader 6: *Deaconess Robin Minick—Family Network Coordinator with Region "A" Partnership for Children—Western North Carolina*

"When spiderwebs unite, they can tie up a lion." This proverb illustrates what I do! I help establish networks and connections between families and the resources and support they need in order to help their children. My work is in response to the needs of young children and families.

Reader 7: *Deaconess Mary Z. Longstreth—Church & Community Worker, Choices, Inc.—South Indiana Annual Conference*

My efforts are directed to the successful reintegration of adult prison returnees to family and community life following incarceration. My task is to support their efforts to become responsible and productive citizens while reducing incarceration recidivism. This work is premised on Christian faith-based approaches of forgiveness, compassion, accountability, and responsibility.

Reader 8: *Deaconess Kumja Lim—Coordinator, Silver Ministry of Asbury Korean UMC—Rocky Mountain Annual Conference*

The major goal of my ministry is to promote the awareness that being old is not a handicap but a bountiful resource for society. We also promote physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Reader 9: *Deaconess Fran Lynch—Church & Community Worker, Willow-Anvik-Grayling Ministry—Alaska Missionary Conference*

This summer, a family I had helped for the past eight years with gifts at Christmas and electric bill payments in the winter had a son killed by a train. When the state trooper asked if they had a minister to call and be with them, they said: "Call Fran. We don't go to church, but she helps us." This led to ongoing assistance from Willow United Methodist Church.

Reader 10: *Deaconess Donna Ratzlaff—Executive Director, United Methodist Cooperative Ministries/Suncoast, Inc.—Florida Annual Conference*

United Methodist Cooperative Ministries is a social outreach ministry of the Florida Annual Conference. We are a multi-service agency serving over 11,000 men, women, and children annually and engaging over 1,000 volunteers. Two-thirds of our services deal with refugees and immigrants, including a preschool, ESOL services, family literacy, and afterschool tutorial services for bi-lingual children. We also provide support to the Parish Nurse food pantry for the homeless and assist local churches in developing outreach mission projects.

Reader 11: *Deaconess Betty Purkey—Program Coordinator, Instituto Latino de Cuidado Pastoral, Inc.—Greater New Jersey Annual Conference*

My ministry works with the Instituto Latino de Cuidado Pastoral, Inc., in New

York City in HIV/AIDS education and outreach to the homeless, and volunteering where we are needed.

Reader 12: *Retired deaconess Betty Ruth Goode recalls two deaconesses who were very influential in her own decision to become a deaconess.*

Alpharetta Leeper was the deaconess in charge of the Methodist Student House on the campus of Florida State College for Women in Tallahassee during my four years there. She continually challenged me to grow.

Caroline Porter, Granddaddy's sister, invited me to spend the summer following my junior year working with her at the Homer Toberman Settlement House in San Pedro, California, where she served as director. That first experience in settlement house work convinced me to choose this area of service.

Hymn: "Jesus, Jesus" #432, *United Methodist Hymnal.*

Activity: *As a group, watch* Deaconess: Is This a Calling for You? *This video answers general questions about the deaconess movement in The United Methodist Church and focuses on three deaconesses and their ministry today. They share their call and preparation as well as their specific work. It is approximately 18 minutes long. A copy of this video is available in your annual conference media center or through any deaconess in active service. Additional copies are available in both DVD format (catalog #3604) and VHS format (catalog #3603) through the Service Center at a cost of $10.00. A study guide for this video is available at no charge from the Deaconess Program Office.*

Gratitude for Our Bounty

Leader: The nearly 120 years of ministry performed by deaconesses has been made possible through the support of United Methodist Women and our predecessor organizations. On behalf of the deaconess, home missioner, and home missionary community, the Deaconess Program Office expresses deep appreciation for your support, which has made possible the fulfilling of the call to service ministry in our church for deaconesses and missionaries. United Methodist Women have planted and nourished many seeds of mission service, and through God's love and grace there is bounty.

As we continue to support those in mission service, let us express our gratitude for those who have been in service and are still serving.

(Distribute pages from the 2004 Prayer Calendar.*)*

Select the name of a retired deaconess or missionary. In writing, please express to her your appreciation for her contribution to God's bounty through mission service.

(Collect the cards and letters along with the offering. Ask for a volunteer to mail them afterwards.)

While you may not always know directly the impact that your prayers, kind words, and cards mean to those in mission service, the support that you provide is invaluable to the morale and spiritual strength of the deaconess or missionary. This is illustrated by deaconess Liwliwa Robledo, on special assignment as President of Harris Memorial College in the Philippines, in her Annual Appointment Review for 2006: "In my first four months at Harris Memorial College in the Philippines, the bishop and his cabinet sent me their individual notes and cards of prayers and support. Some local churches and local and district UMWs sent thoughtful cards and prayerful support. My annual conference UMW, for where I was once an officer, sent me their kind prayers and best wishes. I was very touched by all the thoughtfulness that inspired and encouraged me in my work."

Deaconess Lisa Nichols, serving as a Church & Community Worker with the St. Elmo/Alton Park Empowerment Ministry in the Tennessee Annual Conference, shares in her New Year's letter: "God calls each of us into ministry where we live and worship. I thank you for your continued prayers, cards, letters, and support for my ministry in Chattanooga. Together we make a difference in the lives of those in our communities, and I wouldn't be able to get past the pondering stage and into the action stage without your prayers."

The Offering

Leader: Retired deaconesses and missionaries continue to be involved in nurturing the Fruits of Love in others and continue service even in retirement. Their calling to serve without reward or recognition has often left those in retirement with limited financial means and often not enough to make ends meet, especially with the rising costs of medical care. This year's A Call to Pray and Self-Denial Offering gives us a way to express our love and gratitude for their service by helping financially support those who have given their lives in fulfillment of a calling to a servant ministry. This offering continues our commitment to provide with love and gratitude for those who have so graciously given of themselves. Please put your offering and cards in the basket as it is passed to you.

(Collect the offering, along with the cards and letters for retired deaconesses and missionaries. You may wish to have separate baskets for each and have the music for the closing hymn played during the collection.)

Closing Hymn: "Hymn of Promise" #707, *United Methodist Hymnal.*

Leader:

With love and gratitude, may all service be done;
With assurance that, in mission service, fruit will come from seeds planted;
With joy for the opportunity to give and receive God's love;
Go in peace and bring "The Fruits of Love" to others.
Amen.

(Distribute Prayer Cards before the group leaves the gathering room.)

PREPARATION

1. Well before the gathering, display the Call to Prayer poster in a visible, well-trafficked area of the church and use the church newsletter, bulletin, and website (if available) to publicize the gathering. Also send out a notice requesting participants to bring items that represent times when they have felt love and gratitude to God for the service of others.

2. Use the *Call to Prayer Handbook* in the sample packet sent to each local unit in October 2006 and order more as needed for people planning this special observance. At least six to eight weeks in advance of your service, order a Prayer Card and Offering Envelope from the Service Center for each member (use the Order Form in the sample packet).

3. Ask the Unit Treasurer to distribute the Offering Envelopes before or during the time when the Call to Prayer offering is to be received.

4. Make copies of the list of retired deaconesses and missionaries from the *Prayer Calendar 2006* and provide cards or stationary and stamps.

5. Order in advance from your conference media center or the Service Center the video *Deaconess: Is This a Calling for You?* and make certain to preview it. Set up the equipment and arrange the chairs so that everyone can see the monitor.

6. Provide copies of *The United Methodist Hymnal.*

RESOURCES

A Call to Prayer and Self-Denial Materials for 2006, "Simply Loving" (see the order form in the Call to Prayer sample packet)

Prayer Card
Flyer/Bookmark
Handbook
Packet
Poster
Offering Envelope

New World Outlook magazine

Response, the magazine for United Methodist Women (Note: the March 2006 issue of *Response* is about United Methodist deaconesses. This issue is an excellent companion piece for this program.)

Deaconess: Is This a Calling for You? (video/DVD, 18 minutes) illustrates the call, life, and varied ministries, in both church-related and helping professions, of the modern deaconess. A copy of this video is available in your annual conference media center. In addition, every deaconess in active service has a copy. Additional copies are available in both DVD format (catalog #3604) and VHS format (catalog #3603) through the Service Center at a cost of $10.00. A study guide is available for this video at no charge from the Deaconess Program Office.

Love, Justice and Service: The Ministry of Deaconesses (video, 14 minutes) shows the rich history of the deaconess movement and highlights the current involvement of deaconesses in cutting-edge ministries throughout the church. A copy of this video (catalog #2757) is available through the Service Center at a cost of $10.00.

Brooks-Howell Home (video, 12 minutes) is available by donation through Brooks-Howell Home (266 Merrimon Avenue, Asheville, NC 28801; telephone 1-828-253-6712) and is a natural complement to this meditation. Owned and governed by Women's Division, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, Brooks-Howell Home is open to retirees and staff of the Women's Division, missionaries of the former National and World Divisions (now the General Board of Global Ministries), and others approved for residency. Brooks-Howell is a home primarily for deaconesses and missionaries, a diverse and stimulating group that has served God through service to others around the world. They bring reflections of many cultures that enhance life and activities in the community.

Dougherty, Mary Agnes. *My Calling to Fulfill: Deaconesses in The United Methodist Tradition.* New York: General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 1997. #2656, $9.95.

Reflect, Rekindle, Renew: Meditations Shared by Deaconesses and Home Missionaries. Each page carries a thought or reflection by a deaconess or home missionary to celebrate 112 years of support by Women's Division. Edited by Betty and Art Swarthout, it was presented at the 2000 Convocation of the National Association of Deaconesses and Missionaries. It provides resource material for meditation, mission minutes, and short devotions. #2943, $4.00.

For Such a Time As This is a book being written by deaconess Jeanne Martin in collaboration with the Deaconess Program Office, scheduled for release in 2007. This book provides an understanding of the present-day ministry of deaconesses through their stories.

For additional information about the Office of Deaconess and Home Missioner Program, contact:

Deaconess Program Office
General Board of Global Ministries
475 Riverside Drive #320
New York, NY 10115
Telephone: 212-870-3850
Email: deaconess@gbgm-umc.org.

*Resources listed with stock numbers are available from the Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 7820 Reading Road, Caller No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Order online: www.scorders.org. Telephone: 1-800-305-9857; Fax: 1-513-761-3722; E-mail: scorders@gbgm-umc.org. Prices do not include shipping and handling. See page 80 for information on how to figure these additional costs.

By permission of Murphy-Harpst Children's Centers, Cedartown, Georgia

Pledge Service: Our Time for Mission

BY LYNN HAMRIC

Focus Statement: The purpose of this Pledge Service is to understand the connection between money and mission—then and now; to understand how decisions on mission support are made; and to provide a basis for giving opportunities.

Focus Scriptures: Hebrews 10:32-39; John 21:15-17

Focus Hymn: "We've A Story to Tell to the Nations" #569, *United Methodist Hymnal.*

Focus Image: Prepare a small table with a white cloth, a cross, a Bible, and three candles. The three candles are not only representative of the Trinity but of the work of United Methodist Women in mission—yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Have a small plate or basket for pledge cards.

(As each member arrives, they should be given: a pledge card pamphlet; Mission Money Means; United Methodist Women Channels of Undesignated Giving; and United Methodist Women in Mission flyers.)

Program

Leader: We are United Methodist Women, a group with a rich history and a challenging future, organized for mission. Today we will visit our past, learn of our current work, and pledge support for our future. This pledge is a challenge that requires both action and personal commitment.

(Lead the group in the Purpose.)

(Read the Scriptures.)

For over 135 years, United Methodist Women have recognized the need to commit funds to make life better for women, children, and youth. The commitment of funds has not always been easy but it has always provided hope, encouragement, and a means to a better life. In the mid-1800s, when Isabella Thoburn and Dr. Clara Swain were sent to India as the first missionaries, two cents constituted a sizeable amount of their income. The average per capita income was $186.00, with much less buying power than we have today. Eight dedicated women saw a dream become a reality.

A lot has happened since those first humble beginnings with eight determined women. Our organization has grown to nearly one million and our giving has significantly increased. Unfortunately, the needs of women, children, and youth around the world continue to increase at an even greater rate.

Our pledge supports both national and international areas. Today we will hear about three areas to help us better understand where our money goes. It's important to remember that funding is spent equally on national and international areas and that 32% of the GBGM budget is derived from United Methodist Women's undesignated giving.

Reader 1: Peace Village—Residents of a low-income housing development in the Philippines' Rigal Providence partnered with the Kapatiran Kaunlaran Foundation. This foundation provided training for community leaders so that basic needs could be addressed. The Kapatiran-Kaunlaran Foundation was begun in the early 1900s by Methodist missionary Madaleine G. Klepper. By the mid-1970s they were emphasizing putting feet on the gospel and becoming community-based and more social-action-oriented. This is a wonderful example of an international project.

Reader 2: Deaconess—The challenges for a young person growing up in the inner city can often be overwhelming. Yvette Diaz (now a deaconess) is proof that an individual can break the bonds of poverty. Ms. Diaz was commissioned in 2004 and works with the Pennsylvania Department of Public Works as a casework supervisor. She encourages relationship building among Latino, Anglo, and African-American churches. Undesignated giving supports the Deaconess Program through National Ministries.

Reader 3: Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House—Near St. Louis, Illinois, the Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House offers a myriad of programs that impact generations. The simple act of providing a preschool program also brought the father of a child into the center. With a background involving gang activity, drugs, and years in prison, Frank Best wanted a better life for his son and knew it had to begin with him. With return trips to the House, Frank found willing hands to help him break the cycle and begin a productive way of life.

Since the beginning of the 20th century, when the house was founded by the Methodist Women's Home Missionary Society, countless lives have been touched and changed. Undesignated giving through National Ministries makes this happen.

Leader: We have heard the cry of the needy as well as the response from United Methodist Women. Whether it is a National Mission effort down the street or an International Mission effort in lands we may only read about, we know our pledge dollars join forces with others from women just like us to make a positive impact on someone's life.

Two cents and a prayer are a beautiful foundation upon which we can build. Today when we fill out our pledge cards, let us not only commit a portion of our blessings to those less fortunate but also help those serving in faraway places.

Prayer

Almighty Creator,
Help us to see that your plan is
not established

Until all are allowed to contribute
their unique talents.

Help us realize that none of us can
move forward
As long as one of us is left behind.

Help us work not in competition
for our own gain or purpose,
But rather in cooperation
toward fulfillment
Of your plan for all of us.

We pray "Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done."
And we work toward that.

Poem by John Clossick in Prayer Without Borders

Local Mission Avenues

Individuals are encouraged to participate locally.

- Give a gift to mission with Gift to Mission Cards (Birthday, Thank You, Thinking of You, Christmas, Special Day, Congratulations, New Baby).
- Give a Special Mission Recognition Pin to a friend.
- Give a Gift in Memory to keep mission alive.
- Volunteer to visit shut-ins in your community.
- Volunteer to drive shut-ins to doctor visits, the library, lunch outside, etc.
- Contact local nursing homes, hospice centers, AIDS clinics, women's shelters, etc., for a list of needs.
- Volunteer at local preschools and elementary schools to read to children.

Preparation

1. Order enough copies of handouts and pledge cards from Service Center one month in advance.
2. Reproduce the program and assign parts one month in advance. You may expand on the mission areas outlined from the material provided in the September 2005 *Response* magazine.
3. Gather items for worship center and set up prior to members' arrival.
4. Involve as many members as possible.

Resources

Channels of Undesignated Giving #5717

James Cover, Faculty University of Alabama, School of Commerce & Business Administration

Membership Joys English #5513; Spanish #5514; Korean #5525 (Free for postage and handling)

Ministries with Women and Ministries with Children and Youth English #1892; Spanish #1893; Korean #2580 (30¢)

Mission Money Means English #5752; Spanish #5653 (Free for postage and handling)

Mission: Responding to God's Grace English #2581; Spanish #2582; Korean #2583 (50¢)

Prayer Without Borders: Celebrating Global Wisdom, Catholic Relief Services, ISBN 0-945356-16-1

Response, September 2005 issue #3675 ($1.75)

United Methodist Women in Mission English #2139 ($1.35); Spanish #2143 (25¢); Korean #2182 (25¢)

*Resources listed with stock numbers are available from the Service Center, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 7820 Reading Road, Caller No. 1800, Cincinnati, OH 45222-1800. Order online: www.scorders.org. Telephone: 1-800-305-9857; Fax: 1-513-761-3722; E-mail: scorders@gbgm-umc.org. Prices do not include shipping and handling. See page 80 for information on how to figure these additional costs.

PROGRAM PLANNING FORM

Today's Date _____ **Date of Program** _____

Meeting Place _____

Time of Program _____

General Unit Program ❑ Yes ❑ No **Small Group Program** ❑ Yes ❑ No

Title of Program _____

General Content of Program _____

_____

Methods (mark all that apply):

❑ name tags	❑ readings	❑ small groups	❑ special speaker
❑ audiovisuals	❑ panel presentation	❑ skit or drama	❑ role play
❑ group singing	❑ posters or pictures	❑ use of chalkboard	❑ newsprint
❑ simulation game	❑ learning center	❑ interview	❑ silent prayer time
❑ spoken prayer time	❑ group discussion	❑ group art project	❑ puzzles or quizzes
❑ evaluation time	❑ refreshments		

Scripture References _____

Hymns _____

Worship Center _____

Anticipated Follow-through or Action after the Program _____

_____

Resources from the Service Center (list titles as they apply) _____

_____

Response _____ *New World Outlook* _____

Prayer Calendar _____ *Handbook: Focus on Local and District Units* _____

From the Reading Program _____

Names of Mission Study Resources _____

United Methodist Women's Resources on Giving _____

❑ Annual Report of the Women's Division ❑ Poster on the PURPOSE ❑ Pledge Card

Other Resources _____

Equipment and Supplies (check what is needed and note quantity)

❑ study books __	❑ *Response* __	❑ hymnals __	❑ Bibles __
❑ chairs __	❑ tables __	❑ pencils/pens __	❑ paper handout __
❑ newsprint __	❑ markers/crayons __	❑ chalkboard/chalk __	❑ tape __
❑ art supplies __	❑ cassette player __	❑ slide or filmstrip __	❑ projector __
❑ CD player __	❑ TV/VCR __	❑ extension cord __	❑ coffee/teapots __
❑ napkins __	❑ dishes/paper plates __	❑ mugs/glasses/ paper cups __	❑ forks, spoons, knives __

Leadership Responsibilities

Name(s) of person(s) coordinating this program _____

Coordinator's phone number _____

Name(s) of program and worship leader(s) _____

Name(s) of person(s) responsible for worship center _____

Name(s) of person(s) responsible for setting up _____

Name(s) of person(s) responsible for cleaning up _____

Name of person who will order resources _____

Name(s) of person(s) responsible for contacting special speakers, musicians, resource persons

_____

Other Notes about the Program _____

Rise! Shine! Glorify God!

Evaluation Form

Please rate each program you used in terms of how well it fulfilled its focus statement.

Program	Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
1. The Journey: Through Wilderness to the Promised Land				
2. Who Is My Neighbor?				
3. "Fear Not, Pray Earnestly": Time for Soul Searching				
4. Lord Be Glorified				
5. How We are "Raced"				
6. Shine, Shine, Shine!				
7. Advent/Christmas: Our Place in the Story				
8. Lent/Easter — Rise And Shine: For Christ Is Risen!				
9. World Thank — Sustainers of Life				
10. Quiet Day Service — The Fruits of Love				
11. Pledge Service — Our Time for Mission				

How many members are in your local unit? _____

Were these programs used in your general meeting? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Small group meetings? ❑ Yes ❑ No Both meetings? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Did you follow, in general, the suggestions for presentation? ❑ Yes ❑ No

Why or why not?

_____

If not, what especially effective techniques did you use?

_____

What specific actions or projects grew out of the programs?

_____

What topics would you like to see treated in a future program book?

_____

How could this book be improved?

_____

Please see other side

Return this form to:

General Board of Global Ministries
Executive Secretary for Resource Development
475 Riverside Drive, Room 1501
New York, NY 10115

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Check one

❑ Is this an individual evaluation?

❑ A corporate report of the unit?

❑ A corporate report of the program committee?

A NOTE ABOUT COPYRIGHTS

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Revised formula effective June 1, 2006; earlier formula appears on older resources still in print.

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Purpose of United Methodist Women

The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose PURPOSE is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

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